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WHITTIER'S  
Snow-Bound  
and other Poems

Mabel Martin  
and other Poems

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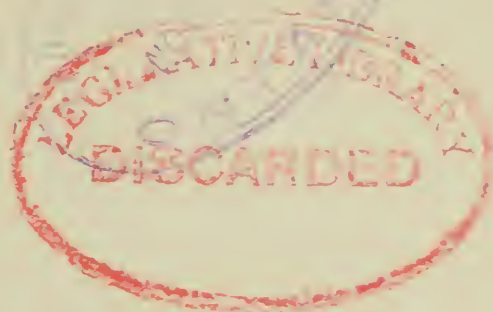
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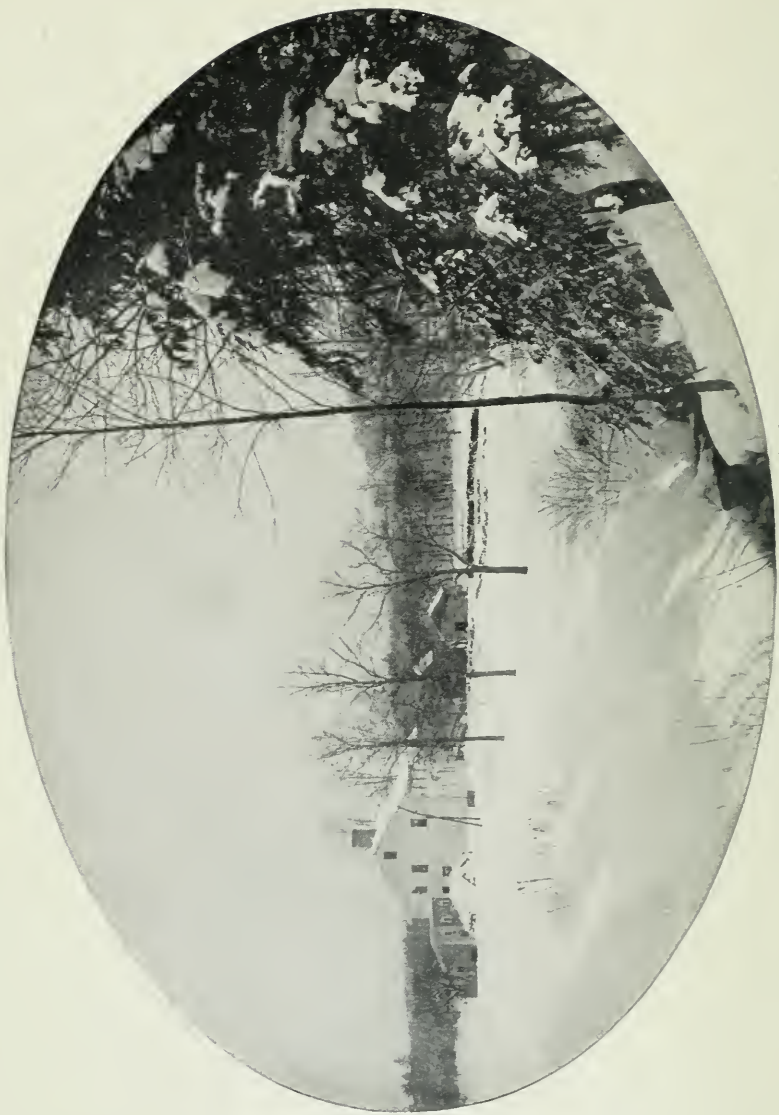




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WHITTIER'S BIRTHPLACE IN WINTER

The Riverside Literature Series

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SNOW-BOUND: AMONG THE HILLS  
SONGS OF LABOR: MABEL  
MARTIN: AND OTHER  
POEMS

BY

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND  
EXPLANATORY NOTES



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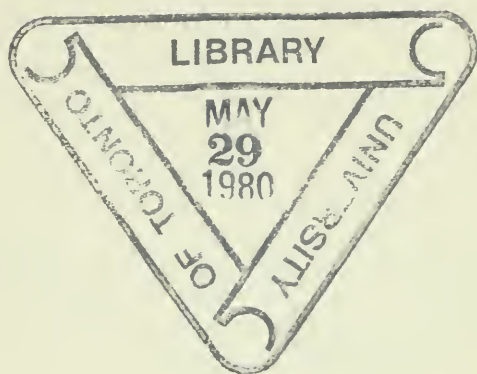
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SNOW-BOUND, AMONG THE HILLS,  
SONGS OF LABOR, AND  
OTHER POEMS

*WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND  
EXPLANATORY NOTES*



David  
P. S.

1982-1987

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MAP OF THE REGION CELEBRATED IN WHITTIER'S POEMS



## A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF JOHN GREEN- LEAF WHITTIER.

### I.

THE house is still standing in East Haverhill, Massachusetts, where Whittier was born, December 17, 1807. It was built near the close of the seventeenth century by an ancestor of the poet, it sheltered several generations of Whittiers, in it John Greenleaf Whittier lived till his thirtieth year, and it is likely to enjoy a long lease of life in association with his name, for after his death it was purchased to be held in trust as a shrine, and its chief room has been restored to the condition in which it was when the boy was living in it, the recollection of whose experience inspired that idyl of New England life, "Snow-Bound."

It is to "Snow-Bound" that one resorts for the most natural and delightful narrative of the associations amongst which Whittier passed his boyhood. His family held to the tenets of the Friends, and the discipline of that society, in connection with the somewhat rigorous exactions of country life in New England in the early part of the century, determined the character of the formal education which he received. In later life he was wont to refer to the journals of Friends which he found in the scanty library in his father's house as forming a large part of his reading in boyhood. He steeped his mind with their thoughts and learned to love their authors for their unconscious saintliness. There were not more than thirty volumes on the shelves, and, with a passion for reading, he read them over and over. One of these books, however, was the Bible, and he possessed himself of its contents, becoming not only familiar with the text, but penetrated by the spirit.

Of regular schooling he had what the neighborhood could give, a few weeks each winter in the district school, and, when he was nineteen, a little more than a year in an academy just started in Haverhill. In "Snow-Bound" he has drawn the portrait of one of his teachers at the district school, and his poem "To My Old Schoolmaster" commemorates another, Joshua Coffin, with whom he preserved a strong friendship in his manhood, when they were engaged in the same great cause of the abolition of human slavery. These teachers, who, according to the old New England custom, lived in turn with the families of their pupils, brought into the Whittier household other reading than strictly religious books, and Coffin especially rendered the boy a great service in introducing him to a knowledge of Burns, whose poems he read aloud once as the family sat by the fireside in the evening. The boy of fourteen was entranced; it was the voice of poetry speaking directly to the ear of poetry, and the newcomer recognized in an instant the prophet whose mantle he was to wear. Coffin was struck with the effect on his listener, and left the book with him. In one of his best known poems, written a generation later, on receiving a sprig of heather in bloom, Whittier records his indebtedness to Burns. To use his own expression, "the older poet woke the younger."

The home life which the boy led, aside from the conscious or unconscious schooling which he found in books, was one of many hardships, but within the sanctuary of a gracious and dignified home. The secluded valley in which he lived was three miles from the nearest village; from the date of the erection of the homestead till now no neighbor's roof has been in sight. The outdoor life was that of a farmer with cattle, tempered, indeed, in the short summer by the kindly gifts of nature, so happily shown in the poem "The Barefoot Boy," but for the most part a life of toil and endurance which left its marks indelibly in the shattered constitution of the poet. Twice a week the family drove to a Friends' meeting at Amesbury, eight miles distant, and in

winter without warm wraps or protecting robes. The old barn, built before that celebrated in "Snow-Bound," had no doors, and the winter snows drifted upon its floor, for neither beasts nor men, in the custom of the time, were expected to resist cold except by their native vigor. Whittier's companions of his own age were a brother and two sisters, one of whom, Elizabeth Whittier, was his nearest associate for the better part of his life, and the household held also that figure so beautiful and helpful in many families, an Aunt Mercy, as also a lively, adventurous bachelor, Uncle Moses. The father of the house, as we are told, was a man of few words; the mother, whose life was spared till that happy time when mother and son changed places in care-taking, had a rarely refined nature, in which the Quaker graces of calmness and order were developed into a noble beauty of living.

## II.

The poems written by him when he was a schoolboy display, as indeed did most of his writing for a few years afterward, little more than a versifying facility and a certain sense of correct form. His mother and his sister Mary encouraged him, but his father, a hard-headed, hard-working farmer, of sound judgment and independent habits of thinking, was too severely aware of the straitened condition of the family to think of anything else for his son than a life of toil like his own. Mary Whittier, with a sister's pride, sent one of her brother's poems, unknown to the author, to the "Free Press" of Newburyport, a new paper lately started which commended itself by its tone to the Quaker Whittier, so that he had subscribed to it. The poem was printed, and the first that the poet knew of it was when he caught the paper from the postman riding by the field where he and his father were working. It was such a moment as comes to a young poet, believing in himself and having that aspiration for recognition which is one of the holiest as it is one of the subtlest elements in the

poetic constitution. The poem was followed by another, which the author himself sent ; and when it was printed, it was introduced by an editorial note, in which the fame of the poet was foretold, and a hint given as to his youth and condition. For with the publication of the first poem, "The Exile's Departure," the editor had become so interested that he had sought the acquaintance of the writer.

Whittier was at work in the fields when the editor, himself a young man, called. He held back, but was induced by his sister to make himself presentable and come in to see the visitor. It was one of those first encounters which in the history of notable men are charged with most interesting potentialities. Garrison, for he was the editor, had not yet done more than take the first step on his thorny path to greatness, and Whittier was still working in the fields, though harboring poetic visitants. Garrison was only a few years older, and in later life those few years counted nothing, but now they were enough to lead him to take the tone of an adviser, and both to Greenleaf and to his father, who entered the room. he spoke of the promise of the youth and the importance of his acquiring an academic education.

It was against the more rigorous interpretation of the Friends' doctrine that literary culture should be made an end, and the notion that the boy should be sent to an academy was not encouraged ; but a few months later, Garrison having left Newburyport for Boston, and Whittier making a new connection with the Haverhill "Gazette," the editor of that paper, Mr. A. W. Thayer, gave the same advice and pressed the consideration that a new academy was shortly to be opened in Haverhill. He offered the boy a home in his own family, and the father now consented, moved also by the doubt if his son could stand the physical strain of farm work. He had no money, however, to spare, and the student must earn his own living. This he did by making a cheap kind of slipper, and devoted himself so faithfully to the industry in the few months intervening between the decision and the opening of the academy,



in May, 1827, that he earned enough to pay his expenses there for a term of six months. "He calculated so closely every item of expense," says his biographer, "that he knew before the beginning of the term that he would have twenty-five cents to spare at its close, and he actually had this sum of money in his pocket when his half year of study was over. It was the rule of his whole life never to buy anything until he had the money in hand to pay for it; and although his income was small and uncertain until past middle life, he was never in debt."

By teaching a district school a few weeks and aiding a merchant with bookkeeping, he was enabled to make out a full year of study, and meantime continued to write both verse and prose for the newspapers. By this means he paved the way for an invitation, when he was twenty-one years of age, to enter the printing-office in Boston of the Colliers, father and son, who published two weekly papers and a magazine. One of the weeklies was a political journal, "The Manufacturer," the other a paper of reform and humanitarianism called "The Philanthropist." Whittier had editorial charge of the former, and occupied himself with writing papers on temperance and the tariff, of which he was an ardent advocate, and with verses and tales. It was not altogether a congenial relation in which he found himself, though the occupation was one to which he was to turn naturally for some time to come for self-support; he remained with the Colliers for a year and a half, and then returned to his father's farm, with between four and five hundred dollars, the savings of half his salary. This he devoted to freeing the farm from the incumbrance of a mortgage, and himself took charge of the farm, for his father was rapidly failing in health.

### III.

The death of his father, in June, 1830, while it set him free from his father's occupation, made it still more imperative for him to earn his living, since the care of the family

fell upon him. He had been using his pen and studying, meanwhile, and his verses were bringing him acquaintances and friends. Through one of these, the brilliant George D. Prentice, he was induced to take up editorial work again in Hartford; but after a determined effort it became clear that his health was too fragile to permit him to devote himself to the exacting work of editing a journal, and in January, 1832, he returned to his home. Just at this time he published his first book, a mere pamphlet of twenty-eight octavo pages containing a poem of New England legendary life, entitled "Moll Pitcher." He had contributed besides more than a hundred poems in the three years since leaving the academy, and had written many more. But though thus active with his pen, his strongest ambition, it may be said, was at this time in the direction of politics. For the next four years he remained on the farm at Haverhill, and when in April, 1836, the farm was sold, he removed, with his mother and sister, to the village of Amesbury, chiefly that they might be nearer the Friends' meeting, but also that Whittier might be more in the centre of things. In his seclusion at East Haverhill he had eagerly watched the course of public events. He was a great admirer of Henry Clay, and a determined opponent of Jackson. With his engaging character, his intellectual readiness, and that political instinct which never deserted him, he was rapidly coming into public notice in his district, and his own desire for serving in office drew him on. To be a member of Congress he must be twenty-five years old, and at the election which was to occur just before his birthday there were many indications that he would be the nominee of his party. This was at the end of 1832, but before the next election occurred there was a great obstacle created by Whittier himself, and thenceforward through the years when he would naturally engage in public life he was practically debarred.

It was not the precariousness of his health which kept Whittier out of active politics, though this was a strong reason for avoiding the stress and strain of a public life, but

the decision which led him to enlist in an unpopular cause. In November, 1831, he had published his poem "To William Lloyd Garrison." It intimates a personal influence under which, with a moral nature fortified by great political insight, he began to consider seriously the movement for the abolition of slavery which was making itself evident here and there. As a specific result of this study he wrote in the spring of 1833 the pamphlet "Justice and Expediency," and published it at his own expense. It was a piece of writing compact with carefully gathered facts and logical deduction, and earnest with the rhetoric of personal conviction. Every sentence was an arraignment of slavery and a blow at his own chances of political office. The performance was an answer to the appeal of his own truthful nature, and it was a deliberate act of renunciation.

Now also began, at first with remote suggestions as in "Toussaint L'Ouverture," then nearer and nearer as he sings his tribute to the men of his day, known or unknown, who had been champions of freedom, — Storrs, Shipley, Torrey, — those bursts of passionate verse which were the vent of his soul overburdened with a sense of the deep wrong committed against God and man by the persistency of African slavery in the United States. In the years immediately following his decision to cast in his lot with the small band of despised anti-slavery agitators almost all of the poems which he wrote were of two sorts, — either breathings of a spirit craving close communion with God, or fiery, scarce-controlled outbursts of feeling upon the evils of slavery, and vials of wrath poured out on those who aided and abetted the monstrous wrong. If, in the years before, Whittier's verses, with their conventional smoothness, had drawn notice by the gentle spirit which suffused them, now his loud cry, violent and tempestuous, broke upon the ear with a harshness and yet an insistent fervor which compelled men to listen. It is indeed a striking phenomenon in poetic growth which one perceives who is familiar with Whittier's compositions and casts his eye down a chronolo-



gical list of his poems. Up to the date of his enlistment in the ranks of the anti-slavery army his ambition had been divided between literature and politics, with a taste in verse which was harmonious and an execution which was not wanting in melody, yet had no remarkable note. After he stepped into the ranks a great change came over his spirit. He rushed into verse in a tumultuous fashion, careless of the form, eager only to utter the message which half choked him with its violence. There was a fierce note to his poetry, rough, but tremendously earnest. This was the first effect, such a troubling of the waters as gave a somewhat turbid aspect to the stream, and for a while his verse was very largely declamatory, rhymed polemics.

But such poems as "Expostulation," beginning

"Our fellow-countrymen in chains!"

were to people then living scarcely so much poems as they were sounds of a great trumpet which were heard, not for their musical sonance, but for their power to stir the blood; and Whittier, though living almost in seclusion, became a name of note to many who would scarcely have known of him had he been a mere legislator or smooth-singing verse-maker. He was recognized by the anti-slavery leaders as one of themselves, and this not only because of his powerful speech in song, but because on closer acquaintance he proved to be a most sagacious and wise reader of men and affairs. His own neighbors quickly learned this quality in him. He was sent to the legislature in 1835 and reelected in 1836, but his frail health made it impossible for him to continue in this service. Nevertheless, he wielded political power with great skill aside from political office. He was indefatigable in accomplishing political ends through political men. No important nominations were made in his district without a preliminary conference with him, and more than once he compelled unwilling representatives to work for the great ends he had in view. It may be said here that though a steadfast leader in the anti-slavery cause he differed from



some of his associates, both now and throughout his life, in setting a high value upon existing political organizations. "From first to last," says his biographer, "he refused to come out from his party until he had done all that could be done to induce it to assist in the work of reform." Whittier himself, in an article written about this time, exclaims, "What an absurdity is moral action apart from political!" meaning of course when dealing with those subjects which demand political action. Once more, in a letter written to the anti-Texas convention of 1845, he said that though as an abolitionist he was no blind worshiper of the Union, he saw nothing to be gained by an effort, necessarily limited and futile, to dissolve it. The moral and political power requisite for dissolving the Union could far more easily abolish every vestige of slavery.

## IV.

We have anticipated a little in these comments the strict order of Whittier's life. In 1836 was published the first bound volume of his verse. It was confined to his poem "Mogg Megone," which he had before printed in the "New England Magazine." It may be taken as the last expression of Whittier's poetic mind before the great change came over it of which we have spoken, and he was himself later aware of its lack of genuine life; but at the end of 1837, Isaac Knapp, publisher of the "Liberator," Garrison's paper, to which Whittier had been contributing his stirring verses, without consulting the poet, issued a volume of over a hundred pages, entitled "Poems written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the Years 1830 and 1838. By John G. Whittier." This was the first collection of his miscellaneous poems, and a year later another volume was issued by Joseph Healy, the financial agent of the Anti-Slavery Society of Pennsylvania. Meanwhile Whittier had been staying awhile in Philadelphia, engaged in editing the "Pennsylvania Free-

man." It was during this time that Pennsylvania Hall was burnt by a mob enraged at the gathering there of an anti-slavery convention. Besides his work on the paper, which was frequently interrupted by ill health, he devoted himself in other ways to the promotion of the cause in which he was so ardently involved, but early in 1840 he found it imperative to give up all this work and retire to his home in Amesbury.

From this time forward he made no attempt to engage in any occupation which did not comport with a quiet life in his own home, except that for a few months in 1844 he resided in Lowell, editing the "*Middlesex Standard*." He wrote much for the papers, and the poetic stream also flowed with greater freedom and it may be said clearness. He contributed a number of poems to the "*Democratic Review*" and other periodicals, and in 1843 the firm of W. D. Ticknor published "*Lays of my Home, and Other Poems*," the first book from which Whittier received any remuneration. The struggle for maintenance through these years was somewhat severe, but in January, 1847, he formed a connection which was not only to afford him a more liberal support, but also to give him a most favorable outlet for his writings, both prose and verse.

It had been decided by the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to establish a weekly paper in Washington, and the editorial charge was committed to Dr. Gamaliel Bailey, an intrepid and able man of experience. The paper was named the "*National Era*," and Whittier was invited to become a regular contributor, editorial and otherwise, but not required to do his work away from home. The paper, as is well known, was the medium for the publication of "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*," and its circulation was so considerable as to make it a source of profit to its conductors as early as by the end of the first year. From 1847 till 1860 Whittier made this paper the chief vehicle of his writings, contributing not only poems, but reviews of contemporary literature, editorial articles, letters, sketches, and the serial

which was published afterward in a book, "Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal."

In 1849 B. B. Mussey & Co., of Boston, brought out a comprehensive collection of Whittier's Poems in a dignified octavo volume illustrated with designs by Hammatt Billings. It was a venture made quite as much on friendly as on commercial grounds. Mr. Mussey was a cordial supporter of the anti-slavery cause, and had a great admiration for Whittier's genius. He was determined to publish the poems in a worthy form, and his generous act met with an agreeable reward. Its success was a testimony to the repute in which Whittier was now held. At the same time his publishers, Messrs. Ticknor & Fields, were in negotiation with him for a new volume, and in 1850 appeared "Songs of Labor, and Other Poems."

The establishment of "The Atlantic Monthly" in 1857 gave another impetus to Whittier's poetic productivity. Here was a singular illustration of the growth in the community about him of a spirit quite in agreement with his own personality. Opposition to slavery lay at the base of the origin of the magazine, and yet in the minds of its projectors this political bond was to unite men of letters and not simply antagonists of slavery. The "Atlantic" was to be the organ of the literary class, but it was to be by no means exclusively devoted to an anti-slavery crusade. Indeed, it would almost seem as if the specific purpose of the magazine was almost lost sight of at first in the richness and abundance of general literature which it immediately stimulated. It is easy now to see how natural and congenial a medium this was for Whittier's verse. In subjecting his political and literary ambition to a great moral purpose, so that he could no longer hope for political official power, he had fulfilled the true saying that to save one's life one must lose it. He had given up the name and place of a political magnate, but he had secured the more impregnable position of the power behind the throne in politics, and in place of a smooth versifier, holding the attention of those with whom

poetry was a plaything, he had become one of the few imperative voices of song, and had taken his place as one of the necessary men in the group of men of letters who now came together to represent the highest force in American literature.

## V.

The war for the Union naturally found Whittier strongly stirred, and more than ever watchful of the great issue which throughout his manhood had been constantly before his eyes; and his triumphant "*Laus Deo*" is as it were the *Nunc Dimittis* of this modern prophet and servant of the Lord. But Whittier was a Quaker, not in any conventional sense, but by birthright, conviction, and growing consciousness of communion with God. Though he wrote such a stirring ballad, therefore, as "*Barbara Frietchie*," he wrote also the lines addressed to his fellow believers:—

"The leveled gun, the battle brand  
We may not take:  
But, calmly loyal, we can stand  
And suffer with our suffering land  
For conscience' sake."

It is interesting also to observe how in this time of stress and pain he escaped to the calm solace of nature. His poem "*The Battle Autumn of 1862*" records this emotion specifically, but more than one poem in the group "*In War Time*" bears testimony to this sentiment. Other poems written during the years 1861–1865 illustrate the longing of Whittier's nature for relief from the terrible knowledge of human strife, a longing definitely expressed by him in the prelude address to William Bradford, the Quaker painter, prefacing "*Amy Wentworth*," in which he says:—

"We, doomed to watch a strife we may not share  
With other weapons than the patriot's prayer,  
Yet owning with full hearts and moistened eyes  
The awful beauty of self-sacrifice,  
And wrung by keenest sympathy for all  
Who gave their loved ones for the living wall



'Twixt law and treason, — in this evil day  
May haply find, through automatic play  
Of pen and pencil, solace to our pain,  
And hearten others with the strength we gain."

Something of the same note is struck in the introduction to "The Countess." But before the war closed, Whittier met with a personal loss which meant much to him every way. His sister Elizabeth, as we have seen, had been his closest companion, his most intimate acquaintance. He had shared his life with her in no light sense, and now he was to see the flame of that life flicker and at last expire in the early fall of 1864. The first poem after her death, "The Vanishers," in its theme, its faint note as of a bird calling from the wood, is singularly sweet, both as a sign of the return of the poet to the world after his flight from it in sympathy and imagination with the retreating spirit of his sister, and as a prophecy of the character of so large a part of Whittier's poetry from this time forward. "The Eternal Goodness," written a twelvemonth later, may be said more positively than any other poem to contain Whittier's creed and the fullness of faith which characterizes it found free and cheerful expression again and again.

Yet another poem which immediately followed it is significant, not only by its repetition of his note of spiritual trust, but by its strong witness to the sane, human quality of Whittier's genius. "Snow-Bound," simple and radiant as it is with human life, is also the reflection of a mind equally at home in spiritual realities. It may fairly be said to sum up Whittier's personal experience and faith; and yet so absolutely free is it from egotism that it has taken its place as the representative poem of New England country life, quite as surely as Burns's "The Cotter's Saturday Night" expresses one large phase of Scottish life.

The success which attended "Snow-Bound" was immediate, and the result was such as to put Whittier at once beyond the caprices of fortune, and to give him so firm a place in the affections of his countrymen as to complete, as it

were, the years of his struggle and his patient endurance. There is something almost dramatic in the appearance of this poem. The war was over: the end of that long contest in which Whittier, physically weak, but spiritually strong, had been a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. What was the force which had been too mighty for a great entrenched wrong? With no conscious purpose, but in the simple delight of poetry, Whittier sang this winter idyl of the North, and one now sees how it imprisons the light which shatters the evil, for it is an epitome of homely work and a family life lived in the eye of God, "duty keeping pace with all."

## VI.

The history of Whittier's life after this date was written in his poems. The outward adventure was slight enough. He divided his year between the Amesbury home and that which he established with other kinsfolk at Oak Knoll in Danvers. In the summer time he was wont to seek the mountains of New Hampshire or the nearer beaches that stretch from Newburyport to Portsmouth. The scenes thus familiar to him were translated by him into song. Human life blended with the forms of nature, and he made this whole region as distinctively his poetic field as Wordsworth made the Lake district of Cumberland, or as Irving made the banks of the Hudson. In such a group as "The Tent on the Beach," in "Among the Hills," "The Witch of Wenham," "Sunset on the Bearcamp," "The Seeking of the Waterfall," "How the Women went from Dover," "The Homestead," and many others he records the delight which he took in nature and especially in the human associations with nature.

"The Tent on the Beach" again illustrates the personal attachments which he formed and which constituted so large an element in the last thirty years of his life. In actual contact and in the friendships formed through books, one may read the largeness of Whittier's sympathy with his fel-

lows, and the warmth of his generous nature. Such poems as the frequent ones commemorating Garrison, Sumner, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, the Fieldses, Mrs. Child, the Spoffords, Stedman, Barnard, Bayard Taylor, Weld, and others illustrate the range of his friendship; but the poems also which bear the names of Tilden, Mulford, Thiers, Halleck, Agassiz, Garibaldi, illustrate likewise a strong sense of the lives of men who perhaps never came within the scope of personal acquaintance.

Nor was it only through human lives that he touched the world about him. His biographer bears witness to the assiduity with which he compensated in later years for the restrictions imposed by necessity on his education in earlier years. He became a great and discursive reader, and his poems, especially after "Snow-Bound," contain many proofs of this, both in the suggestions which gave rise to them and in the allusions which they contain. Northern literature is reflected in "The Dole of Jarl Thorkell," "King Volmer and Elsie," "The Brown Dwarf of Rügen," and others; Eastern life and religion reappear in "Oriental Maxims," "Hymns of the Brahmo Somaj," "The Brewing of Soma," "Giving and Taking," and many more; and history, especially that involved with his own religious faith, gave opportunity for "The King's Missive," "St. Gregory's Guest," "Banished from Massachusetts," "The Two Elizabeths," "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim."

Yet, as we suggested above, the most constant strain, after all, was that which found so full expression in "The Eternal Goodness." So pervasive in Whittier's mind was this thought of God that it did not so much seek occasion for formal utterance, as use with the naturalness of breathing such opportunities as arose, touching with light one theme after another, and forming, indeed, the last whispered voice heard from his lips, "Love to all the world."

It was a serene life of the spirit which Whittier led in the closing years of his life, and he was secure in friendship and the shelter of home. He read, he saw his neighbors

and friends, he wrote letters, he took the liveliest interest in current affairs, especially in politics. He had been a presidential elector in both the Lincoln campaigns; so that he used humorously to say that he was the only person who had had the opportunity to vote for Lincoln four times. He was much sought after for occasional poems, and he complied with these requests from time to time, as in his "Centennial Hymn," "In the Old South," "The Bartholdi Statue," "One of the Signers," and "Haverhill;" but he was quite as likely to take hint from an occasion without the asking. Yet all this time he was assailed by infirmities which would have shaken the serenity of most. He suffered intensely from neuralgic disorders, and was sadly broken in the last years of his life.

He sang up to the end, one may say. His last poem, written only a few weeks before his death, commemorated the eighty-third birthday of Oliver Wendell Holmes. True to the controlling spirit of his life, he sings, —

"The hour draws near, howe'er delayed and late,  
When at the Eternal Gate  
We leave the words and works we call our own,  
And lift void hands alone

"For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul  
Brings to that Gate no toll;  
Giftless we come to Him, who all things gives,  
And live because He lives."

He died at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, September 7, 1892, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.



## SNOW-BOUND: A WINTER IDYL.

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TO THE MEMORY OF THE HOUSEHOLD IT DESCRIBES

THIS POEM IS DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR.

THE inmates of the family at the Whittier homestead who are referred to in the poem were my father, mother, my brother and two sisters, and my uncle and aunt, both unmarried. In addition, there was the district school master, who boarded with us. The "not unfeared, half-welcome guest" was Harriet Livermore, daughter of Judge Livermore, of New Hampshire, a young woman of fine natural ability, enthusiastic, eccentric, with slight control over her violent temper, which sometimes made her religious profession doubtful. She was equally ready to exhort in school-house prayer-meetings and dance in a Washington ball-room, while her father was a member of Congress. She early embraced the doctrine of the Second Advent, and felt it her duty to proclaim the Lord's speedy coming. With this message she crossed the Atlantic and spent the greater part of a long life in travelling over Europe and Asia. She lived some time with Lady Hester Stanhope, a woman as fantastic and mentally strained as herself, on the slope of Mt. Lebanon, but finally quarrelled with her in regard to two white horses with red marks on their backs which suggested the idea of saddles, on which her titled hostess expected to ride into Jerusalem with the Lord. A friend of mine found her, when quite an old woman, wandering in Syria with a tribe of Arabs, who, with the Oriental notion that madness is inspiration, accepted her as their prophetess

and leader. At the time referred to in *Snow-Bound* she was boarding at the Rocks Village, about two miles from us.

In my boyhood, in our lonely farm-house, we had scanty sources of information ; few books and only a small weekly newspaper. Our only annual was the almanac. Under such circumstances story-telling was a necessary resource in the long winter evenings. My father when a young man had traversed the wilderness to Canada, and could tell us of his adventures with Indians and wild beasts, and of his sojourn in the French villages. My uncle was ready with his record of hunting and fishing, and, it must be confessed, with stories which he at least half believed, of witchcraft and apparitions. My mother, who was born in the Indian-haunted region of Somersworth, New Hampshire, between Dover and Portsmouth, told us of the inroads of the savages, and the narrow escape of her ancestors. She described strange people who lived on the Piscataqua and Cocheco, among whom was Bantam the sorcerer. I have in my possession the wizard's "conjuring book," which he solemnly opened when consulted. It is a copy of Cornelius Agrippa's *Magic*, printed in 1651, dedicated to Doctor Robert Child, who, like Michael Scott, had learned

" the art of glammerie  
In Padua beyond the sea,"

and who is famous in the annals of Massachusetts, where he was at one time a resident, as the first man who dared petition the General Court for liberty of conscience. The full title of the book is *Three Books of Occult Philosophy : by Henry Cornelius Agrippa, Knight, Doctor of both Laws, Counsellor to Cæsar's Sacred Majesty and Judge of the Prerogative Court.*

## I.

### SNOW-BOUND.

#### A WINTER IDYL.

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common VVood Fire : and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of VVood doth the same." — COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, Book I. ch. v.

"Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,  
Arrives the snow ; and, driving o'er the fields,  
Seems nowhere to alight ; the whited air  
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,  
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.  
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet  
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit  
Around the radiant fireplace, inclosed  
In a tumultuous privacy of storm."

EMERSON, *The Snow-Storm*.

THE sun that brief December day  
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,  
And, darkly circled, gave at noon  
A sadder light than waning moon.  
5 Slow tracing down the thickening sky  
Its mute and ominous prophecy,  
A portent seeming less than threat,  
It sank from sight before it set.  
A chill no coat, however stout,  
10 Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,  
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,  
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race

Of life-blood in the sharpened face,  
The coming of the snow-storm told.  
15 The wind blew east ; we heard the roar  
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,  
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there  
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores, —  
20 Brought in the wood from out of doors,  
Littered the stalls, and from the mows  
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows :  
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn ;  
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,  
25 Impatient down the stanchion rows  
The cattle shake their walnut bows ;  
While, peering from his early perch  
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,  
The cock his crested helmet bent  
30 And down his querulous challenge sent.  
Unwarmed by any sunset light  
The gray day darkened into night,  
A night made hoary with the swarm  
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,  
35 As zigzag wavering to and fro  
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow :  
And ere the early bedtime came  
The white drift piled the window-frame,  
And through the glass the clothes-line posts  
40 Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on :  
The morning broke without a sun ;  
In tiny spherule traced with lines  
Of Nature's geometric signs,

- 45 In starry flake and pellicle  
 All day the hoary meteor fell ;  
 And, when the second morning shone,  
 We looked upon a world unknown,  
 On nothing we could call our own.  
 50 Around the glistening wonder bent  
 The blue walls of the firmament,  
 No cloud above, no earth below, —  
 A universe of sky and snow !  
 The old familiar sights of ours  
 55 Took marvellous shapes ; strange domes and towers  
 Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,  
 Or garden-wall or belt of wood ;  
 A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,  
 A fenceless drift what once was road ;  
 60 The bridle-post an old man sat  
 With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat ;  
 The well-curb had a Chinese roof ;  
 And even the long sweep, high aloof,  
 In its slant splendor, seemed to tell  
 65 Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath  
 Our father wasted : " Boys, a path ! "  
 Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy  
 Count such a summons less than joy ?)

65. The Leaning Tower of Pisa, in Italy, which inclines from the perpendicular a little more than six feet in eighty, is a campanile, or bell-tower, built of white marble, very beautiful, but so famous for its singular deflection from perpendicularity as to be known almost wholly as a curiosity. Opinions differ as to the leaning being the result of accident or design, but the better judgment makes it an effect of the character of the soil on which the town is built. The Cathedral to which it belongs has suffered so much from a similar cause that there is not a vertical line in it.



- 70 Our buskins on our feet we drew ;  
 With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,  
 To guard our necks and ears from snow,  
 We cut the solid whiteness through ;  
 And, where the drift was deepest, made  
 5 A tunnel walled and overlaid  
 With dazzling crystal : we had read  
 Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,  
 And to our own his name we gave,  
 With many a wish the luck were ours  
 20 To test his lamp's supernal powers.  
 We reached the barn with merry din,  
 And roused the prisoned brutes within.  
 The old horse thrust his long head out,  
 And grave with wonder gazed about ;  
 35 The cock his lusty greeting said,  
 And forth his speckled harem led ;  
 The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,  
 And mild reproach of hunger looked ;  
 The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,  
 90 Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,  
 Shook his sage head with gesture mute,  
 And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore  
 The loosening drift its breath before ;  
 95 Low circling round its southern zone,  
 The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.  
 No church-bell lent its Christian tone

77. For the story of Aladdin and his lamp see any edition of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, or *Riverside Literature Series*, No. 117.

90. *Amun*, or *Ammon*, was an Egyptian being, representing an attribute of Deity under the form of a ram.

To the savage air, no social smoke  
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.  
100 A solitude made more intense  
By dreary-voicèd elements,  
The shrieking of the mindless wind,  
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,  
And on the glass the unmeaning beat  
105 Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.  
Beyond the circle of our hearth  
No welcome sound of toil or mirth  
Unbound the spell, and testified  
Of human life and thought outside.  
110 We minded that the sharpest ear  
The buried brooklet could not hear,  
The music of whose liquid lip  
Had been to us companionship,  
And, in our lonely life, had grown  
115 To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest  
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,  
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank  
From sight beneath the smothering bank,  
120 We piled with care our nightly stack  
Of wood against the chimney-back, —  
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,  
And on its top the stout back-stick ;  
The knotty forestick laid apart,  
125 And filled between with curious art  
The ragged brush ; then, hovering near,  
We watched the first red blaze appear,  
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam  
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,  
130 Until the old, rude-furnished room

- Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom ;  
While radiant with a mimic flame  
Outside the sparkling drift became,  
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree  
135 Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.  
The crane and pendent trammels showed,  
The Turk's heads on the andirons glowed ;  
While childish fancy, prompt to tell  
The meaning of the miracle,  
140 Whispered the old rhyme : “ *Under the tree  
When fire outdoors burns merrily,  
There the witches are making tea.*”

- The moon above the eastern wood  
Shone at its full ; the hill-range stood  
145 Transfigured in the silver flood,  
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,  
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine  
Took shadow, or the sombre green  
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black  
150 Against the whiteness of their back.  
For such a world and such a night  
Most fitting that unwarming light,  
Which only seemed where'er it fell  
To make the coldness visible.

- 155 Shut in from all the world without,  
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,  
Content to let the north-wind roar  
In baffled rage at pane and door,  
While the red logs before us beat  
160 The frost-line back with tropic heat ;  
And ever, when a louder blast  
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,





#### THE KITCHEN IN WHITTIER'S HOME

From a photograph. The room on the right, opening from the kitchen, is the chamber in which the poet was born. The homestead is now owned by a Whittier Memorial Association, and, being open to the public, is visited by thousands of persons annually.



The merrier up its roaring draught  
The great throat of the chimney laughed,  
165 The house-dog on his paws outspread  
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,  
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall  
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall ;  
And, for the winter fireside meet,  
170 Between the andirons' straddling feet,  
The mug of cider simmered slow,  
The apples sputtered in a row,  
And, close at hand, the basket stood  
With nuts from brown October's wood.

175 What matter how the night behaved ?  
What matter how the north-wind raved ?  
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow  
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.  
O Time and Change ! — with hair as gray  
180 As was my sire's that winter day,  
How strange it seems, with so much gone  
Of life and love, to still live on !  
Ah, brother ! only I and thou  
Are left of all that circle now, —  
185 The dear home faces whereupon  
That fitful firelight paled and shone.  
Henceforward, listen as we will,  
The voices of that hearth are still ;  
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,  
190 Those lighted faces smile no more.  
We tread the paths their feet have worn,  
We sit beneath their orchard trees,  
We hear, like them, the hum of bees  
And rustle of the bladed corn ;  
195 We turn the pages that they read,

Their written words we linger o'er,  
But in the sun they cast no shade,  
No voice is heard, no sign is made,  
No step is on the conscious floor!  
200 Yet Love will dream and Faith will trust  
(Since He who knows our need is just)  
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.  
Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!  
205 Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,  
Nor looks to see the breaking day  
Across the mournful marbles play!  
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,  
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
210 That Life is ever lord of Death,  
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,  
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,  
Or stammered from our school-book lore  
215 "The chief of Gambia's golden shore."  
How often since, when all the land  
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,  
As if a far-blown trumpet stirred  
The languorous, sin-sick air, I heard  
220 "*Does not the voice of reason cry,  
Claim the first right which Nature gave,*

215. This line and lines 220-223 are taken from *The African Chief*, a poem by Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton (1759-1846), wife of the Hon. Perez Morton, a former attorney-general of Massachusetts. Mrs. Morton's pseudonym was *Philenia*, and her verse gained some measure of popularity in its day. This poem was included in Caleb Bingham's *The American Preceptor*, a school-book which was in use in Whittier's boyhood.

*From the red scourge of bondage fly  
Nor deign to live a burdened slave ! ”*

Our father rode again his ride

225 On Memphremagog's wooded side ;

Sat down again to moose and samp

In trapper's hut and Indian camp ; .

Lived o'er the old idyllic ease

Beneath St. François' hemlock trees ;

230 Again for him the moonlight shone

On Norman cap and bodiced zone ;

Again he heard the violin play

Which led the village dance away,

And mingled in its merry whirl

235 The grandam and the laughing girl.

Or, nearer home, our steps he led

Where Salisbury's level marshes spread

Mile-wide as flies the laden bee ;

Where merry mowers, hale and strong,

240 Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along

The low green prairies of the sea.

We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,

And round the rocky Isles of Shoals

The hake-broil on the driftwood coals ;

245 The chowder on the sand-beach made,

Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,

With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.

We heard the tales of witchcraft old,

And dream and sign and marvel told

250 To sleepy listeners as they lay

Stretched idly on the salted hay,

Adrift along the winding shores,

When favoring breezes deigned to blow

The square sail of the gundalow,

255 And idle lay the useless oars.



Our mother, while she turned her wheel  
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,  
Told how the Indian hordes came down  
At midnight on Cochecho town,  
260 And how her own great-uncle bore  
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.  
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,  
So rich and picturesque and free  
(The common unrhymed poetry  
265 Of simple life and country ways),  
The story of her early days, —  
She made us welcome to her home ;  
Old hearths grew wide to give us room ;  
We stole with her a frightened look  
270 At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,  
The fame whereof went far and wide  
Through all the simple country-side ;  
We heard the hawks at twilight play,  
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,  
275 The loon's weird laughter far away ;  
We fished her little trout-brook, knew  
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,  
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown  
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,  
280 Saw where in sheltered cove and bay  
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,  
And heard the wild geese calling loud  
Beneath the gray November cloud.  
Then, haply, with a look more grave,  
285 And soberer tone, some tale she gave  
From painful Sewel's ancient tome,

259. Dover in New Hampshire.

286. William Sewel was the historian of the Quakers. Charles



Beloved in every Quaker home,  
 Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,  
 Or Chalkley's Journal, old and quaint, —  
 200 Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint ! —  
 Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,  
 And water-butt and bread-cask failed,  
 And cruel, hungry eyes pursued

Lamb seemed to have as good an opinion of the book as Whittier. In his essay, *A Quakers' Meeting*, in *Essays of Elia*, he says: "Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewel's *History of the Quakers*. . . . It is far more edifying and affecting than anything you will read of Wesley or his colleagues."

289. Thomas Chalkley was an Englishman of Quaker parentage, born in 1675, who travelled extensively as a preacher, and finally made his home in Philadelphia. He died in 1749; his *Journal* was first published in 1747. His own narrative of the incident which the poet relates is as follows: "To stop their murmuring, I told them they should not need to cast lots, which was usual in such cases, which of us should die first, for I would freely offer up my life to do them good. One said, 'God bless you! I will not eat any of you.' Another said, 'He would die before he would eat any of me;' and so said several. I can truly say, on that occasion, at that time, my life was not dear to me, and that I was serious and ingenuous in my proposition; and as I was leaning over the side of the vessel, thoughtfully considering my proposal to the company, and looking in my mind to Him that made me, a very large dolphin came up towards the top or surface of the water, and looked me in the face; and I called the people to put a hook into the sea, and take him, for here is one come to redeem me (I said to them). And they put a hook into the sea, and the fish readily took it, and they caught him. He was longer than myself. I think he was about six feet long, and the largest that ever I saw. This plainly showed us that we ought not to distrust the providence of the Almighty. The people were quieted by this act of Providence, and murmured no more. We caught enough to eat plentifully of, till we got into the capes of Delaware."

His portly presence, mad for food,  
 295 With dark hints muttered under breath  
 Of casting lots for life or death,  
 Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,  
 To be himself the sacrifice.  
 Then, suddenly, as if to save  
 300 The good man from his living grave,  
 A ripple on the water grew,  
 A school of porpoise flashed in view.  
 "Take, eat," he said, "and be content;  
 These fishes in my stead are sent  
 305 By Him who gave the tangled ram  
 To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,  
 Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,  
 The ancient teachers never dumb  
 310 Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.  
 In moons and tides and weather wise,  
 He read the clouds as prophecies,  
 And foul or fair could well divine,  
 By many an occult hint and sign,  
 315 Holding the cunning-warded keys  
 To all the woodcraft mysteries;  
 Himself to Nature's heart so near  
 That all her voices in his ear  
 Of beast or bird had meanings clear,  
 320 Like Apollonius of old,

306. See Genesis xxii. 13.

310. The measure requires the accent ly'ceum, but in stricter use the accent is lyce'um.

320. A philosopher born in the first century of the Christian era, of whom many strange stories were told, especially regarding his converse with birds and animals.

Who knew the tales the sparrows told,  
 Or Hermes, who interpreted  
 What the sage cranes of Nilus said ;  
 A simple, guileless, childlike man,  
 325 Content to live where life began ;  
 Strong only on his native grounds,  
 The little world of sights and sounds  
 Whose girdle was the parish bounds,  
 Whereof his fondly partial pride  
 330 The common features magnified,  
 As Surrey hills to mountains grew  
 In White of Selborne's loving view, —  
 He told how teal and loon he shot,  
 And how the eagle's eggs he got,  
 335 The feats on pond and river done,  
 The prodigies of rod and gun ;  
 Till, warming with the tales he told,  
 Forgotten was the outside cold,  
 The bitter wind unheeded blew,  
 340 From ripening corn the pigeons flew,  
 The partridge drummed i' the wood, the **mink**  
 Went fishing down the river-brink.  
 In fields with bean or clover gay,  
 The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,  
 345 Peered from the doorway of his cell ;  
 The muskrat plied the mason's trade,

322. Hermes Trismegistus, a celebrated Egyptian priest and philosopher, to whom was attributed the revival of geometry, arithmetic, and art among the Egyptians. He was little later than Apollonius.

332. Gilbert White, of Selborne, England, was a clergyman who wrote the *Natural History of Selborne*, a minute, affectionate, and charming description of what could be seen as it were from his own doorstep. The accuracy of his observation and the delightfulness of his manner have kept the book a classic.

And tier by tier his mud-walls laid ;  
And from the shagbark overhead  
The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

350 Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer  
And voice in dreams I see and hear, —  
The sweetest woman ever Fate  
Perverse denied a household mate,  
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less  
355 Found peace in love's unselfishness,  
And welcome whereso'er she went,  
A calm and gracious element,  
Whose presence seemed the sweet income  
And womanly atmosphere of home, —  
360 Called up her girlhood memories,  
The huskings and the apple-bees,  
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,  
Weaving through all the poor details  
And homespun warp of circumstance  
365 A golden woof-thread of romance.  
For well she kept her genial mood  
And simple faith of maidenhood ;  
Before her still a cloud-land lay,  
The mirage loomed across her way ;  
370 The morning dew, that dried so soon  
With others, glistened at her noon ;  
Through years of toil and soil and care,  
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,  
All unprofaned she held apart  
375 The virgin fancies of the heart.  
Be shame to him of woman born  
Who had for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied  
Her evening task the stand beside ;

380 A full, rich nature, free to trust,  
 Truthful and almost sternly just,  
 Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,  
 And make her generous thought a fact,  
 Keeping with many a light disguise  
 385 The secret of self-sacrifice.  
 O heart sore-tried ! thou hast the best  
 That Heaven itself could give thee, — rest,  
 Rest from all bitter thought and things !  
 How many a poor one's blessing went  
 390 With thee beneath the low green tent  
 Whose curtain never outward swings !

As one who held herself a part  
 Of all she saw, and let her heart  
 Against the household bosom lean,  
 395 Upon the motley-braided mat  
 Our youngest and our dearest sat,  
 Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,  
 Now bathed within the fadeless green  
 And holy peace of Paradise.  
 400 Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,  
 Or from the shade of saintly palms,  
 Or silver reach of river calms,  
 Do those large eyes behold me still ?  
 With me one little year ago : —  
 405 The chill weight of the winter snow  
 For months upon her grave has lain ;  
 And now, when summer south-winds blow  
 And brier and harebell bloom again,  
 I tread the pleasant paths we trod,  
 410 I see the violet-sprinkled sod,

398. *Th' unfading green* would be harsher but more correct,  
 since the termination *less* is added to nouns and not to verbs.



Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak  
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,  
Yet following me where'er I went  
With dark eyes full of love's content.  
415 The birds are glad ; the brier-rose fills  
The air with sweetness ; all the hills  
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky ;  
But still I wait with ear and eye  
For something gone which should be nigh,  
420 A loss in all familiar things,  
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.  
And yet, dear heart ! remembering thee,  
Am I not richer than of old ?  
Safe in thy immortality,  
425 What change can reach the wealth I hold ?  
What chance can mar the pearl and gold  
Thy love hath left in trust with me ?  
And while in life's late afternoon,  
Where cool and long the shadows grow,  
430 I walk to meet the night that soon  
Shall shape and shadow overflow,  
I cannot feel that thou art far,  
Since near at need the angels are ;  
And when the sunset gates unbar,  
435 Shall I not see thee waiting stand,  
And, white against the evening star,  
The welcome of thy beckoning hand ?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,  
The master of the district school

439. This schoolmaster was George Haskell, a native of Harvard, Mass., who was a Dartmouth College student at the time referred to in the poem, and afterward became a physician. He removed to Illinois, where he was active in founding Shurt-

- 440 Held at the fire his favored place ;  
Its warm glow lit a laughing face  
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared  
The uncertain prophecy of beard.  
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,  
445 Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,  
Sang songs, and told us what befalls  
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.  
Born the wild Northern hills among,  
From whence his yeoman father wrung  
450 By patient toil subsistence scant,  
Not competence and yet not want,  
He early gained the power to pay  
His cheerful, self-reliant way ;  
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown  
455 To peddle wares from town to town ;  
Or through the long vacation's reach  
In lonely lowland districts teach,  
Where all the droll experience found  
At stranger hearths in boarding round,  
460 The moonlit skater's keen delight,  
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,  
The rustic party, with its rough  
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,  
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,  
465 His winter task a pastime made.  
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein  
He tuned his merry violin,

leff College. Later he made his home in New Jersey, and aided in establishing an industrial school there and in laying out a model community. Till near the end of his own life Mr. Whittier could not recall the teacher's name, and Mr. Haskell seems never to have known that he was immortalized in *Snow-Bound*.

- Or played the athlete in the barn,  
 Or held the good dame's winding yarn,  
 470 Or mirth-provoking versions told  
 Of classic legends rare and old,  
 Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome  
 Had all the commonplace of home,  
 And little seemed at best the odds  
 475 'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods ;  
 Where Pindus-born Arachthus took  
 The guise of any grist-mill brook,  
 And dread Olympus at his will  
 Became a huckleberry hill.  
 480 A careless boy that night he seemed ;  
     But at his desk he had the look  
 And air of one who wisely schemed,  
     And hostage from the future took  
     In trained thought and lore of book.  
 485 Large-brained, clear-eyed, — of such as **he**  
 Shall Freedom's young apostles be,  
 Who, following in War's bloody trail,  
 Shall every lingering wrong assail ;  
 All chains from limb and spirit strike,  
 490 Uplift the black and white alike ;  
 Scatter before their swift advance  
 The darkness and the ignorance,  
 The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,  
 Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,  
 495 Made murder pastime, and the hell  
 Of prison-torture possible ;  
 The cruel lie of caste refute,

476. Pindus is the mountain chain which, running from north to south, nearly bisects Greece. Five rivers take their rise from the central peak, the Aöus, the Arachthus, the Haliacmon, the Penëus, and the Achelöus.

Old forms remould, and substitute  
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,  
400 For blind routine, wise-handed skill;  
A school-house plant on every hill,  
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence  
The quick wires of intelligence;  
Till North and South together brought  
505 Shall own the same electric thought,  
In peace a common flag salute,  
And, side by side in labor's free  
And unresentful rivalry,  
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

510 Another guest that winter night  
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.  
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,  
The honeyed music of her tongue  
And words of meekness scarcely told

515 A nature passionate and bold,  
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,  
Its milder features dwarfed beside  
Her unbent will's majestic pride.  
She sat among us, at the best,

520 A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,  
Rebuking with her cultured phrase  
Our homeliness of words and ways.

A certain pard-like, treacherous grace  
Swayed the lithe limbs and dropped the lash,  
525 Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;  
And under low brows, black with night,  
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;  
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face  
Presaging ill to him whom Fate  
530 Condemned to share her love or hate.

A woman tropical, intense  
 In thought and act, in soul and sense,  
 She blended in a like degree  
 The vixen and the devotee,  
 535 Revealing with each freak or feint  
 The temper of Petruchio's Kate,  
 The raptures of Siena's saint.  
 Her tapering hand and rounded wrist  
 Had facile power to form a fist;  
 540 The warm, dark languish of her eyes  
 Was never safe from wrath's surprise.  
 Brows saintly calm and lips devout  
 Knew every change of scowl and pout;  
 And the sweet voice had notes more high  
 545 And shrill for social battle-cry.  
 Since then what old cathedral town  
 Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,  
 What convent-gate has held its lock  
 Against the challenge of her knock!  
 550 Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,  
 Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,  
 Gray olive slopes of hills that hem  
 Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,  
 Or startling on her desert throne  
 555 The crazy Queen of Lebanon  
 With claims fantastic as her own,  
 Her tireless feet have held their way;  
 And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,

536. See Shakespeare's comedy of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

537. St. Catherine of Siena, who is represented as having wonderful visions. She made a vow of silence for three years.

555. An interesting account of Lady Hester Stanhope, an English gentlewoman who led a singular life on Mount Lebanon in Syria, will be found in Kinglake's *Eothen*, chapter viii.



She watches under Eastern skies,  
560 With hope each day renewed and fresh,  
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,  
Whereof she dreams and prophesies !  
Where'er her troubled path may be,  
The Lord's sweet pity with her go !  
565 The outward wayward life we see,  
The hidden springs we may not know.  
Nor is it given us to discern  
What threads the fatal sisters spun,  
Through what ancestral years has run  
570 The sorrow with the woman born,  
What forged her cruel chain of moods,  
What set her feet in solitudes,  
And held the love within her mute,  
What mingled madness in the blood,  
575 A lifelong discord and annoy,  
Water of tears with oil of joy,  
And hid within the folded bud  
Perversities of flower and fruit.  
It is not ours to separate  
580 The tangled skein of will and fate,  
To show what metes and bounds should stand  
Upon the soul's debatable land,  
And between choice and Providence  
Divide the circle of events ;  
585 But He who knows our frame is just,  
Merciful and compassionate,

562. This "not unfear'd, half-welcome guest," Miss Harriet Livermore, at the time of this narrative was about twenty-eight years old. She once went on an independent mission to the Western Indians, whom she, in common with some others, believed to be remnants of the lost tribes of Israel, but much of her life was spent in the Orient. See the introductory note to this poem, page 1.

And full of sweet assurances  
And hope for all the language is,  
That He remembereth we are dust!

590 At last the great logs, crumbling low,  
Sent out a dull and duller glow,  
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,  
Ticking its weary circuit through,  
Pointed with mutely-warning sign  
595 Its black hand to the hour of nine.  
That sign the pleasant circle broke:  
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,  
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray,  
And laid it tenderly away,  
600 Then roused himself to safely cover  
The dull red brand with ashes over.  
And while, with care, our mother laid  
The work aside, her steps she stayed  
One moment, seeking to express  
605 Her grateful sense of happiness  
For food and shelter, warmth and health,  
And love's contentment more than wealth,  
With simple wishes (not the weak,  
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,  
610 But such as warm the generous heart,  
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)  
That none might lack, that bitter night,  
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard  
615 The wind that round the gables roared,  
With now and then a ruder shock,  
Which made our very bedsteads rock.  
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,

The board-nails snapping in the frost ;  
620 And on us, through the unplastered wall,  
Felt the lightsifted snow-flakes fall ;  
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do  
When hearts are light and life is new ;  
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,  
625 Till in the summer-land of dreams  
They softened to the sound of streams,  
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,  
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout  
630 Of merry voices high and clear ;  
And saw the teamsters drawing near  
To break the drifted highways out.  
Down the long hillside treading slow  
We saw the half-buried oxen go,  
635 Shaking the snow from heads upstost, .  
Their straining nostrils white with frost.  
Before our door the straggling train  
Drew up, an added team to gain.  
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,  
640 Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes  
From lip to lip ; the younger folks  
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,  
Then toiled again the cavalcade  
O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,  
645 And woodland paths that wound between  
Low drooping-pine-boughs winter-weighed.  
From every barn a team afoot,  
At every house a new recruit,  
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,  
650 Haply the watchful young men saw  
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls

And curious eyes of merry girls,  
 Lifting their hands in mock defence  
 Against the snow-balls' compliments,  
 655 And reading in each missive tost  
 The charm which Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;  
 And, following where the teamsters led,  
 The wise old Doctor went his round,  
 660 Just pausing at our door to say,  
 In the brief autocratic way  
 Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,  
 Was free to urge her claim on all,  
     That some poor neighbor sick abed  
 665 At night our mother's aid would need.  
 For, one in generous thought and deed,  
     What mattered in the sufferer's sight  
     The Quaker matron's inward light,  
     The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?  
 670 All hearts confess the saints elect  
     Who, twain in faith, in love agree,  
 And melt not in an acid sect  
     The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed  
 675 Since the great world was heard from last.  
 The Almanac we studied o'er,  
 Read and reread our little store  
 Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;  
 One harmless novel, mostly hid  
 680 From younger eyes, a book forbid,  
 And poetry, (or good or bad,

659. The *wise old Doctor* was Dr. Weld of Haverhill, an able man, who died at the age of ninety-six.

A single book was all we had,)
 Where Ellwood's meek, drab-skirted Muse,  
 A stranger to the heathen Nine,  
 685 Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,  
 The wars of David and the Jews.  
 At last the floundering carrier bore  
 The village paper to our door.  
 Lo! broadening outward as we read,  
 690 To warmer zones the horizon spread;  
 In panoramic length unrolled  
 We saw the marvel that it told.  
 Before us passed the painted Creeks,  
 And daft McGregor on his raids  
 695 In Costa Rica's everglades.  
 And up Taygetus winding slow  
 Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,  
 A Turk's head at each saddle bow!  
 Welcome to us its week-old news,  
 700 Its corner for the rustic Muse,  
 Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,

683. Thomas Ellwood, one of the Society of Friends, a contemporary and friend of Milton, and the suggester of *Paradise Regained*, wrote an epic poem in five books, called *Davideis*, the life of King David of Israel. He wrote the book, we are told, for his own diversion, so it was not necessary that others should be diverted by it. Ellwood's autobiography, a quaint and delightful book, may be found in Howells's series of *Choice Autobiographies*.

693. Referring to the removal of the Creek Indians from Georgia to beyond the Mississippi.

694. In 1822 Sir Gregor McGregor, a Scotchman, began an ineffectual attempt to establish a colony in Costa Rica.

697. Taygetus is a mountain on the Gulf of Messenia in Greece, and near by is the district of Maina, noted for its robbers and pirates. It was from these mountaineers that Ypsilanti, a Greek patriot, drew his cavalry in the struggle with Turkey which resulted in the independence of Greece.



Its record, mingling in a breath  
The wedding bell and dirge of death ;  
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,  
705 The latest culprit sent to jail ;  
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,  
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,  
And traffic calling loud for gain.  
We felt the stir of hall and street,  
710 The pulse of life that round us beat ;  
The chill embargo of the snow  
Was melted in the genial glow ;  
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,  
And all the world was ours once more !

715 Clasp, Angel of the backward look  
And folded wings of ashen gray  
And voice of echoes far away,  
The brazen covers of thy book ;  
The weird palimpsest old and vast,  
720 Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past ;  
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow  
The characters of joy and woe ;  
The monographs of outlived years,  
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,  
725 Green hills of life that slope to death,  
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees  
Shade off to mournful cypresses  
With the white amaranths underneath.  
Even while I look, I can but heed  
730 The restless sands' incessant fall,  
Importunate hours that hours succeed,  
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,  
And duty keeping pace with all.  
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids ;

- 735 I hear again the voice that bids  
The dreamer leave his dream midway  
For larger hopes and graver fears :  
Life greatens in these later years,  
The century's aloe flowers to-day !
- 740 Yet, haply, in some lull of life,  
Some Truce of God which breaks its strife,  
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,  
Dreaming in throngful city ways  
Of winter joys his boyhood knew ;
- 745 And dear and early friends — the few  
Who yet remain — shall pause to view  
These Flemish pictures of old days ;  
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,  
And stretch the hands of memory forth
- 750 To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze !  
And thanks untraced to lips unknown  
Shall greet me like the odors blown  
From unseen meadows newly mown,  
Or lilies floating in some pond,
- 755 Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond ;  
The traveller owns the grateful sense  
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,  
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare  
The benediction of the air.

741. The name is drawn from a historic compact in 1040, when the Church forbade the barons to make any attack on each other between sunset on Wednesday and sunrise on the following Monday, or upon any ecclesiastical fast or feast day. It also provided that no man was to molest a laborer working in the fields, or to lay hands on any implement of husbandry, on pain of excommunication.

747. The Flemish school of painting was chiefly occupied with homely interiors.

## II.

### AMONG THE HILLS.

#### PRELUDE.

ALONG the roadside, like the flowers of gold  
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,  
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,  
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers  
5 Hang motionless upon their upright staves.  
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,  
Wing-weary with its long flight from the south,  
Unfelt ; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf  
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,  
10 Confesses it. The locust by the wall  
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.  
A single hay-cart down the dusty road  
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep  
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,  
15 Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,  
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still  
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door  
A drowsy smell of flowers — gray heliotrope,  
And white sweet clover, and shy mignonette —  
20 Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends  
To the pervading symphony of peace.

2. The Incas were the kings of the ancient Peruvians. At Yucay, their favorite residence, the gardens, according to Prescott, contained "forms of vegetable life skilfully imitated in gold and silver." See *History of the Conquest of Peru*, i. 130.

No time is this for hands long over-worn  
 To task their strength : and (unto Him be praise  
 Who giveth quietness !) the stress and strain  
 25 Of years that did the work of centuries  
 Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once  
 more  
 Freely and full. So, as yon harvesters  
 Make glad their nooning underneath the elms  
 With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,  
 30 I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn  
 The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er  
 Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,  
 And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,  
 35 Proud of field-lore and harvest craft; and feeling  
 All their fine possibilities, how rich  
 And restful even poverty and toil  
 Become when beauty, harmony, and love  
 Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat  
 40 At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man  
 Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock  
 The symbol of a Christian chivalry,  
 Tender and just and generous to her  
 Who clothes with grace all duty ; still, I know  
 45 Too well the picture has another side.  
 How wearily the grind of toil goes on  
 Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear  
 And heart are starved amidst the plenitude  
 Of nature, and how hard and colorless  
 50 Is life without an atmosphere. I look  
 Across the lapse of half a century,

26. The volume in which this poem stands first, and to which  
 it gives the name, was published in the fall of 1868.

And a call to mind old homesteads, where no flower  
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,  
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock, in the place  
55 Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose  
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed  
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine  
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves  
Across the curtainless windows from whose panes  
60 Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness ;  
Within, the cluttered kitchen floor, unwashed  
(Broom-clean I think they called it) ; the best  
room  
Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air  
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless  
65 Save the inevitable sampler hung  
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,  
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, beneath  
Impossible willows ; the wide-throated hearth  
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing  
70 The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back ;  
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,  
Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen men,  
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,  
With scarce a human interest save their own  
75 Monotonous round of small economies,  
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood ;  
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,  
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet ;  
For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink  
80 Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves ;  
For them in vain October's holocaust  
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,  
The sacramental mystery of the woods.  
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,



85 But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,  
 Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls  
 And winter pork with the least possible outlay  
 Of salt and sanctity; in daily life  
 Showing as little actual comprehension  
 90 Of Christian charity and love and duty,  
 As if the Sermon on the Mount had been  
 Outdated like a last year's almanac :  
 Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,  
 And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,  
 95 The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,  
 The sun and air his sole inheritance,  
 Laughed at poverty that paid its taxes,  
 And hugged his rags in self-complacency !

Not such should be the homesteads of a land  
 100 Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell  
 As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,  
 With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make  
 His hour of leisure richer than a life  
 Of fourscore to the barons of old time ;  
 105 Our yeoman should be equal to his home,  
 Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,  
 A man to match his mountains, not to creep  
 Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain  
 In this light way (of which I needs must own  
 110 With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,

110. The *Anti-Jacobin* was a periodical published in England in 1797-98, to ridicule democratic opinions, and in it Canning, who afterward became premier of England, wrote many light verses and *jeux d'esprit*, among them a humorous poem called the *Needy Knife-Grinder*, in burlesque of a poem by Southey. The knife-grinder is anxiously appealed to to tell his story of wrong and injustice, but answers as here :—

"Story, God bless you! I've none to tell."

“Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!”)

Invite the eye to see and heart to feel

The beauty and the joy within their reach, —

Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes

115 Of nature free to all. Haply in years

That wait to take the places of our own,

Heard where some breezy balcony looks down

On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon

Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,

120 In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet

Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine

May seem the burden of a prophecy,

Finding its late fulfilment in a change

Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up

125 Through broader culture, finer manners, love,

And reverence, to the level of the hills.

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,

And not of sunset, forward, not behind,

Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee  
bring

130 All the old virtues, whatsoever things

Are pure and honest and of good repute,

But add thereto whatever bard has sung

Or seer has told of when in trance and dream

They saw the Happy Isles of prophecy!

135 Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide

Between the right and wrong; but give the heart

The freedom of its fair inheritance;

[ 121. See Ruth iii.

134. The Fortunate Isles, or Isles of the Blest, were imaginary islands in the West, in classic mythology, set in a sea which was warmed by the rays of the declining sun. Hither the favorites of the gods were borne, and here they dwelt in endless joy.

- Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so  
 long,  
 At Nature's table feast his ear and eye  
 140 With joy and wonder ; let all harmonies  
 Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon  
 The princely guest, whether in soft attire  
 Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,  
 And, lending life to the dead form of faith,  
 145 Give human nature reverence for the sake  
 Of One who bore it, making it divine  
 With the ineffable tenderness of God ;  
 Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,  
 The heirship of an unknown destiny,  
 150 The unsolved mystery round about us, make  
 A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.  
 Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things  
 Should minister, as outward types and signs  
 Of the eternal beauty which fulfils  
 155 The one great purpose of creation. Love,  
 The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!

## AMONG THE HILLS.

- For weeks the clouds had raked the hills  
 And vexed the vales with raining,  
 And all the woods were sad with mist,  
 160 And all the brooks complaining.

At last, a sudden night-storm tore  
 The mountain veils asunder,  
 And swept the valleys clean before  
 The besom of the thunder.

165 Through Sandwich Notch the west-wind sang  
    Good morrow to the cotter ;  
    And once again Chocorua's horn  
    Of shadow pierced the water.

    Above his broad lake Ossipee,  
170 Once more the sunshine wearing,  
    Stooped, tracing on that silver shield  
    His grim armorial bearing.

    Clear drawn against the hard blue sky  
    The peaks had winter's keenness ;  
175 And, close on autumn's frost, the vales  
    Had more than June's fresh greenness.

    Again the sodden forest floors  
    With golden lights were checkered,  
    Once more rejoicing leaves in wind  
180 And sunshine danced and flickered.

    It was as if the summer's late  
    Atoning for its sadness  
    Had borrowed every season's charm  
    To end its days in gladness.

185 I call to mind those banded vales  
    Of shadow and of shining,  
    Through which, my hostess at my side,  
    I drove in day's declining.

165. Sandwich Notch, Chocorua Mountain, Ossipee Lake, and the Bearcamp River are all striking features of the scenery in that part of New Hampshire which lies just at the entrance of the White Mountain region. Many of Whittier's most graceful poems are drawn from the suggestions of this country, where he often spent the summer months, and a mountain near West Ossipee has received his name.

We held our sideling way above  
190 The river's whitening shallows,  
By homesteads old, with wide-flung barns  
Swept through and through by swallows, —

By maple orchards, belts of pine  
And larches climbing darkly  
195 The mountain slopes, and, over all,  
The great peaks rising starkly.

You should have seen that long hill-range  
With gaps of brightness riven, —  
How through each pass and hollow streamed  
200 The purpling lights of heaven, —

Rivers of gold-mist flowing down  
From far celestial fountains, —  
The great sun flaming through the rifts  
Beyond the wall of mountains!

205 We paused at last where home-bound cows  
Brought down the pasture's treasure,  
And in the barn the rhythmic flails  
Beat out a harvest measure.

We heard the night hawk's sullen plunge,  
210 The crow his tree-mates calling :  
The shadows lengthening down the slopes  
About our feet were falling,

And through them smote the level sun  
In broken lines of splendor,  
215 Touched the gray rocks and made the green  
Of the shorn grass more tender.



The maples bending o'er the gate,  
Their arch of leaves just tinted  
With yellow warmth, the golden glow  
220 Of coming autumn hinted.

Keen white between the farm-house showed,  
And smiled on porch and trellis  
The fair democracy of flowers  
That equals cot and palace:

225 And weaving garlands for her dog,  
'Twixt chidings and caresses,  
A human flower of childhood shook  
The sunshine from her tresses.

On either hand we saw the signs  
230 Of fancy and of shrewdness,  
Where taste had wound its arms of vines  
Round thrift's uncomely rudeness.

The sun-brown farmer in his frock  
Shook hands, and called to Mary :  
235 Bare-armed, as Juno might, she came,  
White-aproned from her dairy.

Her air, her smile, her motions, told  
Of womanly completeness ;  
A music as of household songs  
240 Was in her voice of sweetness.

Not beautiful in curve and line  
But something more and better,  
The secret charm eluding art,  
Its spirit, not its letter ; —

245 An inborn grace that nothing lacked  
 Of culture or appliance, —  
 The warmth of genial courtesy,  
 The calm of self-reliance.

Before her queenly womanhood  
 250 How dared our hostess utter  
 The paltry errand of her need  
 To buy her fresh-churned butter?

She led the way with housewife pride,  
 Her goodly store disclosing,  
 255 Full tenderly the golden balls  
 With practised hands disposing.

Then, while along the western hills  
 We watched the changeful glory  
 Of sunset, on our homeward way,  
 260 I heard her simple story.

The early crickets sang; the stream  
 Plashed through my friend's narration:  
 Her rustic patois of the hills  
 Lost in my free translation.

265 "More wise," she said, "than those who swarm  
 Our hills in middle summer,  
 She came, when June's first roses blow,  
 To greet the early comer.

"From school and ball and rout she came,  
 270 The city's fair, pale daughter,  
 To drink the wine of mountain air  
 Beside the Bearcamp Water.

“ Her step grew firmer on the hills  
That watch our homesteads over ;  
275 On cheek and lip, from summer fields,  
She caught the bloom of clover.

“ For health comes sparkling in the streams  
From cool Chocorua stealing :  
There 's iron in our Northern winds ;  
280 Our pines are trees of healing.

“ She sat beneath the broad-armed elms  
That skirt the mowing-meadow,  
And watched the gentle west-wind weave  
The grass with shine and shadow.

285 “ Beside her, from the summer heat  
To share her grateful screening,  
With forehead bared, the farmer stood,  
Upon his pitchfork leaning.

“ Framed in its damp, dark locks, his face  
290 Had nothing mean or common, —  
Strong, manly, true, the tenderness  
And pride beloved of woman.

“ She looked up, glowing with the health  
The country air had brought her,  
295 And, laughing, said : ‘ You lack a wife,  
Your mother lacks a daughter.

“ “ To mend your frock and bake your bread  
You do not need a lady :  
Be sure among these brown old homes  
300 Is some one waiting ready, —

“ ‘Some fair, sweet girl, with skilful hand  
And cheerful heart for treasure,  
Who never played with ivory keys,  
Or danced the polka’s measure.’

305 “ ‘He bent his black brows to a frown,  
He set his white teeth tightly.  
‘ ‘T is well,’ he said, ‘for one like you  
To choose for me so lightly.

“ ‘You think, because my life is rude,  
310 I take no note of sweetness :  
I tell you love has naught to do  
With meetness or unmeetness.

“ ‘Itself its best excuse, it asks  
No leave of pride or fashion  
315 When silken zone or homespun frock  
It stirs with throbs of passion.

“ ‘You think me deaf and blind : you bring  
Your winning graces hither  
As free as if from cradle-time  
320 We two had played together.

“ ‘You tempt me with your laughing eyes,  
Your cheek of sundown’s blushes,  
A motion as of waving grain,  
A music as of thrushes.

325 “ ‘The plaything of your summer sport,  
The spells you weave around me  
You cannot at your will undo,  
Nor leave me as you found me.

“ ‘ You go as lightly as you came,  
330 Your life is well without me ;  
What care you that these hills will close  
Like prison-walls about me ?

“ ‘ No mood is mine to seek a wife,  
Or daughter for my mother :  
335 Who loves you loses in that love  
All power to love another !

“ ‘ I dare your pity or your scorn,  
With pride your own exceeding ;  
I fling my heart into your lap  
340 Without a word of pleading.’

“ She looked up in his face of pain,  
So archly, yet so tender :  
‘ And if I lend you mine,’ she said,  
‘ Will you forgive the lender ?

345 “ ‘ Nor frock nor tan can hide the man ;  
And see you not, my farmer,  
How weak and fond a woman waits  
Behind this silken armor ?

“ ‘ I love you : on that love alone,  
350 And not my worth, presuming,  
Will you not trust for summer fruit  
The tree in May-day blooming ? ’

“ Alone the hangbird overhead,  
His hair-swung cradle straining,  
355 Looked down to see love’s miracle, —  
The giving that is gaining.



“ And so the farmer found a wife,  
His mother found a daughter :  
There looks no happier home than hers  
360 On pleasant Bearcamp Water.

“ Flowers spring to blossom where she walks  
The careful ways of duty ;  
Our hard, stiff lines of life with her  
Are flowing curves of beauty.

365 “ Our homes are cheerier for her sake,  
Our door-yards brighter blooming,  
And all about the social air  
Is sweeter for her coming.

“ Unspoken homilies of peace  
370 Her daily life is preaching ;  
The still refreshment of the dew  
Is her unconscious teaching.

“ And never tenderer hand than hers  
Unknits the brow of ailing ;  
375 Her garments to the sick man's ear  
Have music in their trailing.

“ And when, in pleasant harvest moons,  
The youthful huskers gather,  
Or sleigh-drives on the mountain ways  
380 Defy the winter weather, —

“ In sugar-camps, when south and warm  
The winds of March are blowing,  
And sweetly from its thawing veins  
The maple's blood is flowing, —

385 " In summer, where some liliated pond  
Its virgin zone is baring,  
Or where the ruddy autumn fire  
Lights up the apple-paring, —

" The coarseness of a ruder time  
390 Her finer mirth displaces,  
A subtler sense of pleasure fills  
Each rustic sport she graces.

" Her presence lends its warmth and health  
To all who come before it.  
395 If woman lost us Eden, such  
As she alone restore it.

" For larger life and wiser aims  
The farmer is her debtor ;  
Who holds to his another's heart  
400 Must needs be worse or better.

" Through her his civic service shows  
A purer-toned ambition ;  
No double consciousness divides  
The man and politician.

405 " In party's doubtful ways he trusts  
Her instincts to determine ;  
At the loud polls, the thought of her  
Recalls Christ's Mountain Sermon.

" He owns her logic of the heart,  
410 And wisdom of unreason,  
Supplying, while he doubts and weighs,  
The needed word in season.

“ He sees with pride her richer thought,  
Her fancy’s freer ranges ;  
415 And love thus deepened to respect  
Is proof against all changes.

“ And if she walks at ease in ways  
His feet are slow to travel,  
And if she reads with cultured eyes  
420 What his may scarce unravel,

“ Still clearer, for her keener sight  
Of beauty and of wonder,  
He learns the meaning of the hills  
He dwelt from childhood under.

425 “ And higher, warmed with summer lights,  
Or winter-crowned and hoary,  
The rigid horizon lifts for him  
Its inner veils of glory.

“ He has his own free, bookless lore,  
430 The lessons nature taught him,  
The wisdom which the woods and hills  
And toiling men have brought him :

“ The steady force of will whereby  
Her flexile grace seems sweeter ;  
435 The sturdy counterpoise which makes  
Her woman’s life completer :

“ A latent fire of soul which lacks  
No breath of love to fan it ;  
And wit, that, like his native brooks,  
440 Plays over solid granite.,

“ How dwarfed against his manliness  
 She sees the poor pretension,  
 The wants, the aims, the follies, born  
 Of fashion and convention !

445 “ How life behind its accidents  
 Stands strong and self-sustaining,  
 The human fact transcending all  
 The losing and the gaining.

“ And so, in grateful interchange  
 450 Of teacher and of hearer,  
 Their lives their true distinctness keep  
 While daily drawing nearer.

“ And if the husband or the wife  
 In home's strong light discovers  
 455 Such slight defaults as failed to meet  
 The blinded eyes of lovers,

“ Why need we care to ask ? — who dreams  
 Without their thorns of roses,  
 Or wonders that the truest steel  
 460 The readiest spark discloses ?

“ For still in mutual sufferance lies  
 The secret of true living :  
 Love scarce is love that never knows  
 The sweetness of forgiving.

465 “ We send the Squire to General Court,  
 He takes his young wife thither ;

465. The General Court is the official designation of the legislative body in New Hampshire and in Massachusetts.

No prouder man election day  
Rides through the sweet June weather.

“ He sees with eyes of manly trust  
470 All hearts to her inclining ;  
Not less for him his household light  
That others share its shining.”

Thus, while my hostess spake, there grew  
Before me, warmer tinted  
475 And outlined with a tenderer grace,  
The picture that she hinted.

The sunset smouldered as we drove  
Beneath the deep hill-shadows.  
Below us wreaths of white fog walked  
480 Like ghosts the haunted meadows.

Sounding the summer night, the stars  
Dropped down their golden plummets ;  
The pale arc of the Northern lights  
Rose o'er the mountain summits, —

485 Until, at last, beneath its bridge,  
We heard the Béarcamp flowing,  
And saw across the mapled lawn  
The welcome home-lights glowing ; —

And, musing on the tale I heard,  
490 'T were well, thought I, if often  
To rugged farm-life came the gift  
To harmonize and soften ; —

If more and more we found the troth  
Of fact and fancy plighted,



495 And culture's charm and labor's strength  
In rural homes united, —

The simple life, the homely hearth,  
With beauty's sphere surrounding,  
And blessing toil where toil abounds  
500 With graces more abounding.

### III.

#### SONGS OF LABOR.

The *Songs of Labor* were written in 1845 and 1846, and printed first in magazines. They reflect the working life of New England at that time, before the great changes were wrought which have nearly put an end to some of the forms of labor, the praises of which here are sung. The *Songs* were collected into a volume, entitled *Songs of Labor and other Poems*, in 1850, and the following Dedication was then prefixed.

#### DEDICATION.

I WOULD the gift I offer here

Might grace from thy favor take,  
And, seen through Friendship's atmosphere,  
On softened lines and coloring, wear  
5 The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy sake.

Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain :

But what I have I give to thee,  
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,  
And paler flowers, the latter rain  
10 Calls from the westering slope of life's autumnal  
lea.

Above the fallen groves of green,

Where youth's enchanted forest stood,  
Dry root and mossèd trunk between,  
A sober after-growth is seen,  
15 As springs the pine where falls the gay-leaved maple  
wood !

Yet birds will sing, and breezes play  
Their leaf-harps in the sombre tree ;  
And through the bleak and wintry day  
It keeps its steady green alway, —  
20 So, even my after-thoughts may have a charm for  
thee.

Art's perfect forms no moral need,  
And beauty is its own excuse ;  
But for the dull and flowerless weed  
Some healing virtue still must plead,  
25 And the rough ore must find its honors in its use.

So haply these, my simple lays  
Of homely toil, may serve to show  
The orchard bloom and tasselled maize  
That skirt and gladden duty's ways,  
30 The unsung beauty hid life's common things below.

Haply from them the toiler, bent  
Above his forge or plough, may gain  
A manlier spirit of content,  
And feel that life is wisest spent  
35 Where the strong working hand makes strong the  
working brain.

The doom which to the guilty pair  
Without the walls of Eden came,  
Transforming sinless ease to care  
And rugged toil, no more shall bear  
40 The burden of old crime, or mark of primal shame.

22. "For the idea of this line," says Mr. Whittier, "I am indebted to Emerson in his inimitable sonnet to the *Rhodora*: —

" ' If eyes were made for seeing,  
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.' "

A blessing now, a curse no more ;  
 Since He, whose name we breathe with awe,  
 The coarse mechanic vesture wore,  
 A poor man toiling with the poor,  
 45 In labor, as in prayer, fulfilling the same law.

## THE SHOEMAKERS.

Ho ! workers of the old time styled  
 The Gentle Craft of Leather !  
 Young brothers of the ancient guild,  
 Stand forth once more together !  
 50 Call out again your long array,  
 In the olden merry manner !  
 Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,  
 Fling out your blazoned banner !

Rap, rap ! upon the well-worn stone  
 55 How falls the polished hammer !  
 Rap, rap ! the measured sound has grown  
 A quick and merry clamor.  
 Now shape the sole ! now deftly curl  
 The glossy vamp around it,  
 60 And bless the while the bright-eyed girl  
 Whose gentle fingers bound it !

For you, along the Spanish main  
 A hundred keels are ploughing ;

52. October 25. St. Crispin and his brother Crispinian were said to be martyrs of the third century who while preaching the gospel had made their living by shoemaking.

62. A name given to the northern coast of South America when it was taken possession of by the Spaniards.

For you, the Indian on the plain  
65 His lasso-coil is throwing ;  
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark  
The woodman's fire is lighting ;  
For you, upon the oak's gray bark,  
The woodman's axe is smiting.

70 For you, from Carolina's pine  
The rosin-gum is stealing ;  
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine  
Her silken skein is reeling ;  
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams  
75 His rugged Alpine ledges ;  
For you, round all her shepherd homes,  
Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,  
On moated mound or heather,  
80 Where'er the need of trampled right  
Brought toiling men together ;  
Where the free burghers from the wall  
Defied the mail-clad master,  
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,  
85 No craftsman rallied faster.

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride,  
Ye heed no idle scorner ;  
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,  
And duty done, your honor.  
90 Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,  
The jury Time empanels,

72. So associated was Florence, Italy, in the minds of people with the manufacture of sewing silk, that when the industry was set up in the neighborhood of Northampton, Mass., the factory village took the name of Florence.



And leave to truth each noble name  
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Hans Sachs, are living yet,  
95 In strong and hearty German ;  
And Bloomfield's lay, and Gifford's wit,  
And patriot fame of Sherman ;  
Still from his book, a mystic seer,  
The soul of Behmen teaches,  
100 And England's priestcraft shakes to hear  
Of Fox's leathern breeches.

The foot is yours ; where'er it falls,  
It treads your well-wrought leather  
On earthen floor, in marble halls,  
105 On carpet, or on heather.  
Still there the sweetest charm is found  
Of matron grace or vestal's,  
As Hebe's foot bore nectar round  
Among the old celestials !

110 Rap, rap ! your stout and rough brogan,  
With footsteps slow and weary,

94. See Longfellow's poem, *Nuremberg*, for a reference to Hans Sachs, the cobbler poet.

96. Robert Bloomfield, an English poet, author of *The Farmer's Boy*, was bred a shoemaker, as was William Gifford, a wit and satirist, and first editor of the *Quarterly Review*, but Gifford hated his craft bitterly.

97. Roger Sherman, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was at one time a shoemaker in New Milford, Connecticut.

99. Jacob Behmen, or Boehme, a German visionary of the 17th century.

101. George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, as they are more commonly called.

May wander where the sky's blue span  
Shuts down upon the prairie.  
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,  
115 By Saratoga's fountains,  
Or twinkle down the summer dance  
Beneath the Crystal Mountains!

The red brick to the mason's hand,  
The brown earth to the tiller's,  
120 The shoe in yours shall wealth command,  
Like fairy Cinderella's!  
As they who shunned the household maid  
Beheld the crown upon her,  
So all shall see your toil repaid  
125 With hearth and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,  
In water cool and brimming, —  
“All honor to the good old Craft,  
Its merry men and women!”  
130 Call out again your long array,  
In the old time's pleasant manner:  
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,  
Fling out his blazoned banner!

#### THE FISHERMEN.

HURRAH! the seaward breezes  
135 Sweep down the bay amain;  
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!  
Run up the sail again!

117. A name early given to the White Mountains from the crystals found there by the first explorers, who thought them diamonds.

Leave to the lubber landmen  
The rail-car and the steed ;  
140 The stars of heaven shall guide us,  
The breath of heaven shall speed.

From the hill-top looks the steeple,  
And the light-house from the sand ;  
And the scattered pines are waving  
145 Their farewell from the land.  
One glance, my lads, behind us,  
For the homes we leave one sigh,  
Ere we take the change and chances  
Of the ocean and the sky.

150 Now, brothers, for the icebergs  
Of frozen Labrador,  
Floating spectral in the moonshine,  
Along the low, black shore !  
Where like snow the gannet's feathers  
155 On Brador's rocks are shed,  
And the noisy murr are flying,  
Like black scuds, overhead ;

Where in mist the rock is hiding,  
And the sharp reef lurks below,  
160 And the white squall smites in summer,  
And the autumn tempests blow ;  
Where through gray and rolling vapor,  
From evening unto morn,  
A thousand boats are hailing,  
165 Horn answering unto horn.

Hurrah ! for the Red Island,  
With the white cross on its crown !

Hurrah ! for Meccatina,  
And its mountains bare and brown !  
170 Where the Caribou's tall antlers  
O'er the dwarf-wood freely toss,  
And the footstep of the Mickmack  
Has no sound upon the moss.

There we 'll drop our lines, and gather  
175 Old Ocean's treasures in,  
Where'er the mottled mackerel  
Turns up a steel-dark fin.  
The sea 's our field of harvest,  
Its scaly tribes our grain ;  
180 We 'll reap the teeming waters  
As at home they reap the plain !

Our wet hands spread the carpet,  
And light the hearth of home ;  
From our fish, as in the old time,  
185 The silver coin shall come.  
As the demon fled the chamber  
Where the fish of Tobit lay,  
So ours from all our dwellings  
Shall frighten Want away.

190 Though the mist upon our jackets  
In the bitter air congeals,  
And our lines wind stiff and slowly  
From off the frozen reels ;  
Though the fog be dark around us,  
195 And the storm blow high and loud,  
We will whistle down the wild wind,  
And laugh beneath the cloud !

[ 187. See the story in the *Book of Tobit*, one of the *Apocrypha*.

In the darkness as in daylight,  
On the water as on land,  
200 God's eye is looking on us,  
And beneath us is His hand!  
Death will find us soon or later,  
On the deck or in the cot;  
And we cannot meet him better  
205 Than in working out our lot.

Hurrah! hurrah! the west-wind  
Comes freshening down the bay,  
The rising sails are filling;  
Give way, my lads, give way!  
210 Leave the coward landsman clinging  
To the dull earth, like a weed;  
The stars of heaven shall guide us,  
The breath of heaven shall speed!

## THE LUMBERMEN.

WILDLY round our woodland quarters  
215 Sad-voiced Autumn grieves;  
Thickly down these swelling waters  
Float his fallen leaves.  
Through the tall and naked timber,  
Column-like and old,  
220 Glean the sunsets of November,  
From their skies of gold.

O'er us, to the southland heading,  
Screams the gray wild-goose;  
On the night-frost sounds the treading  
225 Of the brindled moose.



Noiseless creeping, while we 're sleeping,  
Frost his task-work plies ;  
Soon, his icy bridges heaping,  
Shall our log-piles rise.

230 When, with sounds of smothered thunder,  
On some night of rain,  
Lake and river break asunder  
Winter's weakened chain,  
Down the wild March flood shall bear them  
235 To the saw-mill's wheel,  
Or where Steam, the slave, shall tear them  
With his teeth of steel.

Be it starlight, be it moonlight,  
In these vales below,  
240 When the earliest beams of sunlight  
Streak the mountain's snow,  
Crisps the hoar-frost, keen and early,  
To our hurrying feet,  
And the forest echoes clearly  
245 All our blows repeat.

Where the crystal Ambijejis  
Stretches broad and clear,  
And Millnoket's pine-black ridges  
Hide the browsing deer ;  
250 Where, through lakes and wide morasses,  
Or through rocky walls,  
Swift and strong, Penobscot passes  
White with foamy falls ;

Where, through clouds, are glimpses given  
255 Of Katahdin's sides, —

Rock and forest piled to heaven,  
Torn and ploughed by slides !  
Far below, the Indian trapping,  
In the sunshine warm ;  
250 Far above, the snow-cloud wrapping  
Half the peak in storm !

Where are mossy carpets better  
Than the Persian weaves,  
And than Eastern perfumes sweeter  
265 Seem the fading leaves ;  
And a music wild and solemn,  
From the pine-tree's height,  
Rolls its vast and sea-like volume  
On the wind of night ;

270 Make we here our camp of winter ;  
And, through sleet and snow,  
Pitchy knot and beechen splinter  
On our hearth shall glow.  
Here, with mirth to lighten duty,  
275 We shall lack alone  
Woman's smile and girlhood's beauty,  
Childhood's lisping tone.

But their hearth is brighter burning  
For our toil to-day ;  
280 And the welcome of returning  
Shall our loss repay,  
When, like seamen from the waters,  
From the woods we come,  
Greeting sisters, wives, and daughters,  
285 Angels of our home !

Not for us the measured ringing  
From the village spire,  
Not for us the Sabbath singing  
Of the sweet-voiced choir ;  
290 Ours the old, majestic temple,  
Where God's brightness shines  
Down the dome so grand and ample,  
Propped by lofty pines !

Through each branch-enwoven skylight,  
295 Speaks He in the breeze,  
As of old beneath the twilight  
Of lost Eden's trees !  
For His ear, the inward feeling  
Needs no outward tongue ;  
300 He can see the spirit kneeling  
While the axe is swung.

Heeding truth alone, and turning  
From the false and dim,  
Lamp of toil or altar burning  
305 Are alike to Him.  
Strike, then, comrades ! Trade is waiting  
On our rugged toil ;  
Far ships waiting for the freighting  
Of our woodland spoil !

310 Ships, whose traffic links these highlands,  
Bleak and cold, of ours,  
With the citron-planted islands  
Of a clime of flowers ;  
To our frosts the tribute bringing  
315 Of eternal heats ;

In our lap of winter flinging  
Tropic fruits and sweets.

Cheerly, on the axe of labor,  
Let the sunbeams dance,  
320 Better than the flash of sabre  
Or the gleam of lance !  
Strike ! With every blow is given  
Freer sun and sky,  
And the long-hid earth to heaven  
325 Looks, with wondering eye !

Loud behind us grow the murmurs  
Of the age to come ;  
Clang of smiths, and tread of farmers,  
Bearing harvest home !  
330 Here her virgin lap with treasures  
Shall the green earth fill ;  
Waving wheat and golden maize-ears  
Crown each beechen hill.

Keep who will the city's alleys,  
335 Take the smooth-shorn plain ;  
Give to us the cedarn valleys,  
Rocks and hills of Maine !  
In our North-land, wild and woody,  
Let us still have part ;  
340 Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,  
Hold us to thy heart !

Oh, our free hearts beat the warmer  
For thy breath of snow ;  
And our tread is all the firmer  
345 For thy rocks below.

Freedom, hand in hand with labor,  
Walketh strong and brave ;  
On the forehead of his neighbor  
No man writeth Slave !

350 Lo, the day breaks ! old Katahdin's  
Pine-trees show its fires,  
While from these dim forest gardens  
Rise their blackened spires.  
Up, my comrades ! up and doing !  
355 Manhood's rugged play  
Still renewing, bravely hewing  
Through the world our way !

#### THE SHIP-BUILDERS.

The sky is ruddy in the east,  
The earth is gray below,  
360 And, spectral in the river-mist,  
The ship's white timbers show.  
Then let the sounds of measured stroke  
And grating saw begin ;  
The broad-axe to the gnarlèd oak,  
365 The mallet to the pin !

Hark ! roars the bellows, blast on blast,  
The sooty smithy jars,  
And fire-sparks, rising far and fast,  
Are fading with the stars.  
370 All day for us the smith shall stand  
Beside that flashing forge ;  
All day for us his heavy hand  
The groaning anvil scourge.



From far-off hills, the panting team  
 375 For us is toiling near ;  
 For us the raftsmen down the stream  
 Their island barges steer.  
 Rings out for us the axe-man's stroke  
 In forests old and still ;  
 380 For us the century-circled oak  
 Falls crashing down his hill.

Up! up! in nobler toil than ours  
 No craftsmen bear a part :  
 We make of Nature's giant powers  
 385 The slaves of human Art.  
 Lay rib to rib and beam to beam,  
 And drive the treenails free ;  
 Nor faithless joint nor yawning seam  
 Shall tempt the searching sea !

390 Where'er the keel of our good ship  
 The sea's rough field shall plough ;  
 Where'er her tossing spars shall drip  
 With salt-spray caught below ;  
 That ship must heed her master's beck,  
 395 Her helm obey his hand,  
 And seamen tread her reeling deck  
 As if they trod the land.

Her oaken ribs the vulture-beak  
 Of Northern ice may peel ;  
 400 The sunken rock and coral peak  
 May grate along her keel ;  
 And know we well the painted shell  
 We give to wind and wave,  
 Must float, the sailor's citadel,  
 405 Or sink, the sailor's grave !

Ho! strike away the bars and blocks,  
And set the good ship free!  
Why lingers on these dusty rocks  
The young bride of the sea?

410 Look! how she moves adown the grooves,  
In graceful beauty now!  
How lowly on the breast she loves  
Sinks down her virgin prow!

God bless her! wheresoe'er the breeze  
415 Her snowy wing shall fan,  
Aside the frozen Hebrides  
Or sultry Hindostan!  
Where'er, in mart or on the main,  
With peaceful flag unfurled,  
420 She helps to wind the silken chain  
Of commerce round the world!

Speed on the ship! But let her bear  
No merchandise of sin,  
No groaning cargo of despair  
425 Her roomy hold within;  
No Lethean drug for Eastern lands,  
Nor poison-draught for ours;  
But honest fruits of toiling hands  
And Nature's sun and showers.

430 Be hers the Prairie's golden grain,  
The Desert's golden sand,  
The clustered fruits of sunny Spain,  
The spice of Morning-land!  
Her pathway on the open main  
435 May blessings follow free,  
And glad hearts welcome back again  
Her white sails from the sea!

## THE DROVERS.

THROUGH heat and cold, and shower and sun,  
Still onward cheerily driving!  
440 There's life alone in duty done,  
And rest alone in striving.  
But see! the day is closing cool,  
The woods are dim before us;  
The white fog of the wayside pool  
445 Is creeping slowly o'er us.

The night is falling, comrades mine,  
Our footsore beasts are weary,  
And through yon elms the tavern sign  
Looks out upon us cheery.  
450 The landlord beckons from his door,  
His beechen fire is glowing;  
These ample barns, with feed in store,  
Are filled to overflowing.

From many a valley frowned across  
455 By brows of rugged mountains;  
From hillsides where, through spongy moss,  
Gush out the river fountains;  
From quiet farm-fields, green and low,  
And bright with blooming clover;  
460 From vales of corn the wandering crow  
No richer hovers over, —

Day after day our way has been  
O'er many a hill and hollow;  
By lake and stream, by wood and glen,  
465 Our stately drove we follow.

Through dust-clouds rising thick and **dun**  
As smoke of battle o'er us,  
Their white horns glisten in the sun,  
Like plumes and crests before us.

470 We see them slowly climb the hill,  
As slow behind it sinking ;  
Or, thronging close, from roadside rill,  
Or sunny lakelet, drinking.  
Now crowding in the narrow road,  
475 In thick and struggling masses,  
They glare upon the teamster's load,  
Or rattling coach that passes.

Anon, with toss of horn and tail,  
And paw of hoof, and bellow,  
480 They leap some farmer's broken pale,  
O'er meadow-close or fallow.  
Forth comes the startled goodman ; **forth**  
Wife, children, house-dog sally,  
Till once more on their dusty path  
485 The baffled truants rally.

We drive no starvelings, scraggy grown,  
Loose-legged, and ribbed and bony,  
Like those who grind their noses down  
On pastures bare and stony, —  
490 Lank oxen, rough as Indian dogs,  
And cows too lean for shadows,  
Disputing feebly with the frogs  
The crop of saw-grass meadows !

In our good drove, so sleek and fair,  
495 No bones of leanness rattle,

No tottering hide-bound ghosts are there,  
Or Pharaoh's evil cattle.  
Each stately beeve bespeaks the hand  
That fed him unrepining ;  
500 The fatness of a goodly land  
In each dun hide is shining.

We've sought them where, in warmest nooks,  
The freshest feed is growing,  
By sweetest springs and clearest brooks  
505 Through honeysuckle flowing ;  
Wherever hillsides, sloping south,  
Are bright with early grasses,  
Or, tracking green the lowland's drouth,  
The mountain streamlet passes.

510 But now the day is closing cool,  
The woods are dim before us,  
The white fog of the wayside pool  
Is creeping slowly o'er us.  
The cricket to the frog's bassoon  
515 His shrillest time is keeping ;  
The sickle of yon setting moon  
The meadow-mist is reaping.

The night is falling, comrades mine,  
Our footsore beasts are weary,  
520 And through yon elms the tavern sign  
Looks out upon us cheery.  
To-morrow, eastward with our charge  
We'll go to meet the dawning,  
Ere yet the pines of Kearsarge  
525 Have seen the sun of morning.



When snow-flakes o'er the frozen earth,  
 Instead of birds, are flitting ;  
 When children throng the glowing hearth,  
 And quiet wives are knitting ;  
 530 While in the firelight strong and clear  
 Young eyes of pleasure glisten,  
 To tales of all we see and hear  
 The ears of home shall listen.

By many a Northern lake and hill,  
 535 From many a mountain pasture,  
 Shall fancy play the Drover still,  
 And speed the long night faster.  
 Then let us on, through shower and sun,  
 And heat and cold, be driving ;  
 540 There's life alone in duty done,  
 And rest alone in striving.

#### THE HUSKERS.

It was late in mild October, and the long autumnal  
 rain  
 Had left the summer harvest-fields all green with  
 grass again ;  
 The first sharp frost had fallen, leaving all the  
 woodlands gay  
 545 With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the meadow-  
 flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose  
 broad and red,  
 At first a rayless disk of fire, he brightened as he  
 sped ;

Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and  
subdued,  
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pic-  
tured wood.

550 And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the  
night,  
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow  
light ;  
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified  
the hill ;  
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay brighter,  
greener still.

And shouting boys in woodland haunts caught  
glimpses of that sky,  
555 Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and laughed,  
they knew not why,  
And school-girls gay with aster-flowers, beside the  
meadow brooks,  
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sunshine of  
sweet looks.

From spire and barn looked westerly the patient  
weathercocks ;  
But even the birches on the hill stood motionless  
as rocks.  
560 No sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's  
dropping shell,  
And the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rus-  
tling as they fell.

The summer grains were harvested ; the stubble-  
fields lay dry,

Where June winds rolled, in light and shade, the  
pale green waves of rye ;  
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed  
with wood,  
565 Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn  
crop stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks  
that, dry and sere,  
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the  
yellow ear ;  
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a ver-  
dant fold,  
And glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's  
sphere of gold.

570 There wrought the busy harvesters ; and many a  
creaking wain  
Bore slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk-  
and grain ;  
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank  
down, at last,  
And like a merry guest's farewell, the day in bright-  
ness passed.

And lo ! as through the western pines, on meadow,  
stream, and pond,  
575 Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire be-  
yond,  
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory  
shone,  
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into  
one !

As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed  
away,  
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil  
shadows lay ;  
180 From many a brown old farm-house, and hamlet  
without name,  
Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merry  
huskers came.

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks  
in the mow,  
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant  
scene below ;  
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ears  
before,  
185 And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown  
cheeks glimmering o'er.

Half hidden, in a quiet nook, serene of look and  
heart,  
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart ;  
While up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling  
in its shade,  
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy  
children played. .

190 Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young  
and fair,  
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of  
soft brown hair,  
The master of the village school, sleek of hair and  
smooth of tongue,  
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-  
ballad sung.

## THE CORN-SONG.

HEAP high the farmer's wintry hoard!

595 Heap high the golden corn!

No richer gift has Autumn poured  
From out her lavish horn!

Let other lands, exulting, glean

The apple from the pine,

600 The orange from its glossy green,  
The cluster from the vine;

We better love the hardy gift

Our rugged vales bestow,

To cheer us when the storm shall drift

605 Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers

Our ploughs their furrows made,

While on the hills the sun and showers

Of changeful April played.

610 We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain

Beneath the sun of May,

And frightened from our sprouting grain

The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June

615 Its leaves grew green and fair,

And waved in hot midsummer's noon

Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with Autumn's moonlit eves,

Its harvest-time has come,



620 We pluck away the frosted leaves,  
And bear the treasure home.

There, when the snows about us drift,  
And winter winds are cold,  
Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,  
625 And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk  
Around their costly board ;  
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,  
By homespun beauty poured !

630 Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth  
Sends up its smoky curls,  
Who will not thank the kindly earth,  
And bless our farmer girls !

Then shame on all the proud and vain,  
635 Whose folly laughs to scorn  
The blessing of our hardy grain,  
Our wealth of golden corn !

Let earth withhold her goodly root,  
Let mildew blight the rye,  
640 Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,  
The wheat-field to the fly :

But let the good old crop adorn  
The hills our fathers trod ;  
Still let us, for His golden corn,  
645 Send up our thanks to God !

#### IV.

#### SELECTED POEMS.

#### THE BAREFOOT BOY.

- BLESSINGS on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan !  
With thy turned-up pantaloons,  
And thy merry whistled tunes ;  
5 With thy red lip, redder still  
Kissed by strawberries on the hill ;  
With the sunshine on thy face,  
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace ;  
From my heart I give thee joy, —  
10 I was once a barefoot boy !  
Prince thou art, — the grown-up man  
Only is republican.  
Let the million-dollared ride !  
Barefoot, trudging at his side,  
15 Thou hast more than he can buy  
In the reach of ear and eye, —  
Outward sunshine, inward joy :  
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy !
- Oh for boyhood's painless play,  
20 Sleep that wakes in laughing day,  
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,  
Knowledge never learned of schools,

- Of the wild bee's morning chase,  
Of the wild-flower's time and place,  
25 Flight of fowl and habitude  
Of the tenants of the wood ;  
How the tortoise bears his shell,  
How the woodchuck digs his cell,  
And the ground-mole sinks his well ;  
30 How the robin feeds her young,  
How the oriole's nest is hung ;  
Where the whitest lilies blow,  
Where the freshest berries grow,  
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,  
35 Where the wood-grape's clusters shine ;  
Of the black wasp's cunning way,  
Mason of his walls of clay,  
And the architectural plans  
Of gray hornet artisans !  
40 For, eschewing books and tasks,  
Nature answers all he asks ;  
Hand in hand with her he walks,  
Face to face with her he talks,  
Part and parcel of her joy, —  
45 Blessings on the barefoot boy !

- Oh for boyhood's time of June,  
Crowding years in one brief moon,  
When all things I heard or saw,  
Me, their master, waited for.  
50 I was rich in flowers and trees,  
Humming-birds and honey-bees ;  
For my sport the squirrel played,  
Plied the snouted mole his spade ;  
For my taste the blackberry cone  
55 Purpled over hedge and stone ;

Laughed the brook for my delight  
Through the day and through the night,  
Whispering at the garden wall,  
Talked with me from fall to fall ;  
60 Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,  
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,  
Mine, on bending orchard trees,  
Apples of Hesperides !  
Still as my horizon grew,  
65 Larger grew my riches too ;  
All the world I saw or knew  
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,  
Fashioned for a barefoot boy !

Oh for festal dainties spread,  
70 Like my bowl of milk and bread ;  
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,  
On the door-stone, gray and rude !  
O'er me, like a regal tent,  
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,  
75 Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,  
Looped in many a wind-swung fold,  
While for music came the play  
Of the pied frogs' orchestra ;  
And, to light the noisy choir,  
80 Lit the fly his lamp of fire.  
I was monarch : pomp and joy  
Waited on the barefoot boy !

Cheerily, then, my little man,  
Live and laugh, as boyhood can !

63. The Hesperides were three nymphs who were set to guard the golden apples which Gæa (Earth) planted in the gardens of Here, as a wedding gift.

- 85 Though the flinty slopes be hard,  
 Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,  
 Every morn shall lead thee through  
 Fresh baptisms of the dew ;  
 Every evening from thy feet  
 90 Shall the cool wind kiss the heat :  
 All too soon these feet must hide  
 In the prison cells of pride,  
 Lose the freedom of the sod,  
 Like a colt's for work be shod,  
 95 Made to tread the mills of toil,  
 Up and down in ceaseless moil :  
 Happy if their track be found  
 Never on forbidden ground ;  
 Happy if they sink not in  
 100 Quick and treacherous sands of sin.  
 Ah ! that thou couldst know thy joy,  
 Ere it passes, barefoot boy !

## HOW THE ROBIN CAME.

## AN ALGONQUIN LEGEND.

- HAPPY young friends, sit by me,  
 Under May's blown apple-tree,  
 While these home-birds in and out  
 Through the blossoms flit about.  
 5 Hear a story, strange and old,  
 By the wild red Indians told,  
 How the robin came to be :  
 Once a great chief left his son, —  
 Well-beloved, his only one, —  
 10 When the boy was well-nigh grown,  
 In the trial-lodge alone.



Left for tortures long and slow  
Youths like him must undergo,  
Who their pride of manhood test,  
15 Lacking water, food, and rest.

Seven days the fast he kept,  
Seven nights he never slept.  
Then the young boy, wrung with pain,  
Weak from nature's overstrain,  
20 Faltering, moaned a low complaint:  
"Spare, me, father, for I faint!"  
But the chieftain, haughty-eyed,  
Hid his pity in his pride.  
"You shall be a hunter good,  
25 Knowing never lack of food:  
You shall be a warrior great,  
Wise as fox and strong as bear;  
Many scalps your belt shall wear,  
If with patient heart you wait  
30 Bravely till your task is done.  
Better you should starving die  
Than that boy and squaw should cry  
Shame upon your father's son!"

When next morn the sun's first rays  
35 Glistened on the hemlock sprays,  
Straight that lodge the old chief sought,  
And boiled samp and moose meat brought.  
"Rise and eat, my son!" he said.  
Lo, he found the poor boy dead!  
40 As with grief his grave they made,  
And his bow beside him laid,  
Pipe, and knife, and wampum-braid,  
On the lodge-top overhead,

Preening smooth its breast of red  
45 And the brown coat that it wore,  
Sat a bird, unknown before.  
And as if with human tongue,  
“Mourn me not,” it said, or sung:  
“I, a bird, am still your son,  
50 Happier than if hunter fleet,  
Or a brave, before your feet  
Laying scalps in battle won.  
Friend of man, my song shall cheer  
Lodge and corn-land ; hovering near,  
55 To each wigwam I shall bring  
Tidings of the coming spring ;  
Every child my voice shall know  
In the moon of melting snow,  
When the maple’s red bud swells,  
60 And the wind-flower lifts its bells.  
As their fond companion  
Men shall henceforth own your son,  
And my song shall testify  
That of human kin am I.”

65 Thus the Indian legend saith  
How, at first, the robin came  
With a sweeter life and death,  
Bird for boy, and still the same.  
If my young friends doubt that this  
70 Is the robin’s genesis,  
Not in vain is still the myth  
If a truth be found therewith :  
Unto gentleness belong  
Gifts unknown to pride and wrong ;  
75 Happier far than hate is praise, —  
He who sings than he who slays.

## TELLING THE BEES.

A remarkable custom, brought from the Old Country, formerly prevailed in the rural districts of New England. On the death of a member of the family, the bees were at once informed of the event, and their hives were dressed in mourning. This ceremonial was supposed to be necessary to prevent the swarms from leaving their hives and seeking a new home. The scene is minutely that of the Whittier homestead.

HERE is the place ; right over the hill  
Runs the path I took ;  
You can see the gap in the old wall still,  
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

5 There is the house, with the gate red-barred,  
And the poplars tall ;  
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,  
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun ;  
10 And down by the brink  
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed o'errun,  
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,  
Heavy and slow ;  
15 And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,  
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There 's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze ;  
And the June sun warm  
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,  
20 Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care  
From my Sunday coat  
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,  
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

25 Since we parted, a month had passed, —  
To love, a year ;  
Down through the beeches I looked at last  
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now, — the slantwise rain  
30 Of light through the leaves,  
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,  
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before, —  
The house and the trees,  
35 The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door, —  
Nothing changed but the hive of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,  
Forward and back,  
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,  
40 Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened : the summer sun  
Had the chill of snow ;  
For I knew she was telling the bees of one  
Gone on the journey we all must go !

45 Then I said to myself, " My Mary weeps  
For the dead to-day :  
Haply her blind grandsire sleeps  
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low ; on the doorway sill,  
50 With his cane to his chin,  
The old man sat ; and the chore-girl still  
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since  
In my ear sounds on : —  
55 “ Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence !  
Mistress Mary is dead and gone ! ”

### SWEET FERN.

THE subtle power in perfume found  
Nor priest nor sibyl vainly learned ;  
On Grecian shrine or Aztec mound  
No censer idly burned.

6 That power the old-time worships knew,  
The Corybantes' frenzied dance,  
The Pythian priestess swooning through  
The wonderland of trance.

And Nature holds, in wood and field,  
10 Her thousand sunlit censers still ;  
To spells of flower and shrub we yield  
Against or with our will.

I climbed a hill path strange and new  
With slow feet, pausing at each turn ;

6. The Corybantes were priests of Rhea, or Cybele, the great mother of the gods, worshipped in Phrygia. In their solemn festivals they displayed extravagant fury in dancing.

7. The priestess of the Delphic oracle uttered her prophecies while in an ecstasy.



25 A sudden waft of west wind blew  
The breath of the sweet fern.

That fragrance from my vision swept  
The alien landscape ; in its stead,  
Up fairer hills of youth I stepped,  
20 As light of heart as tread.

I saw my boyhood's lakelet shine  
Once more through rifts of woodland shade ;  
I knew my river's winding line  
By morning mist betrayed.

25 With me June's freshness, lapsing brook,  
Murmurs of leaf and bee, the call  
Of birds, and one in voice and look  
In keeping with them all.

A fern beside the way we went  
30 She plucked, and, smiling, held it up,  
While from her hand the wild, sweet scent  
I drank as from a cup.

O potent witchery of smell !  
The dust-dry leaves to life return,  
35 And she who plucked them owns the spell  
And lifts her ghostly fern.

Or sense or spirit ? Who shall say  
What touch the chord of memory thrills ?  
It passed, and left the August day  
40 Ablaze on lonely hills.

## THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY.

THE proudest now is but my peer,  
The highest not more high ;  
To-day, of all the weary year,  
A king of men am I.  
5 To-day alike are great and small,  
The nameless and the known ;  
My palace is the people's hall,  
The ballot-box my throne !

Who serves to-day upon the list  
10 Beside the served shall stand ;  
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,  
The gloved and dainty hand !  
The rich is level with the poor,  
The weak is strong to-day ;  
15 And sleekest broadcloth counts no more  
Than homespun frock of gray.

To-day let pomp and vain pretence  
My stubborn right abide ;  
I set a plain man's common sense  
20 Against the pedant's pride.  
To-day shall simple manhood try  
The strength of gold and land ;  
The wide world has not wealth to buy  
The power in my right hand !

25 While there's a grief to seek redress,  
Or balance to adjust,  
Where weighs our living manhood less  
Than Mammon's vilest dust, —

While there 's a right to need my vote,  
 30 A wrong to sweep away,  
 Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!  
 A man 's a man to-day!

## THE HILL-TOP.

THE burly driver at my side,  
 We slowly climbed the hill,  
 Whose summit, in the hot noontide,  
 Seemed rising, rising still.  
 5 At last, our short noon-shadows hid  
 The top-stone, bare and brown,  
 From whence, like Gizeh's pyramid,  
 The rough mass slanted down.

I felt the cool breath of the North;  
 10 Between me and the sun,  
 O'er deep, still lake, and ridgy earth,  
 I saw the cloud-shades run.  
 Before me, stretched for glistening miles,  
 Lay mountain-girdled Squam;  
 15 Like green-winged birds, the leafy isles  
 Upon its bosom swam.

And, glimmering through the sun-haze warm,  
 Far as the eye could roam,  
 Dark billows of an earthquake storm  
 20 Beflecked with clouds like foam,  
 Their vales in misty shadow deep,  
 Their rugged peaks in shine,

7. Gizeh's pyramid is one of the great pyramids on the banks of the Nile, near Cairo.

14. Squam or Asquam lake, at the base of the White Hills.

I saw the mountain ranges sweep  
The horizon's northern line.

25 There towered Chocorua's peak ; and west  
Moosehillock's woods were seen,  
With many a nameless slide-scarred crest  
And pine-dark gorge between.  
Beyond them, like a sun-rimmed cloud,  
30 The great Notch mountains shone,  
Watched over by the solemn-browed  
And awful face of stone !

" A good look-off ! " the driver spake ;  
" About this time last year,  
35 I drove a party to the Lake,  
And stopped, at evening, here.  
'T was duskish down below ; but all  
These hills stood in the sun,  
Till, dipped behind yon purple wall,  
40 He left them, one by one.

" A lady, who, from Thornton hill,  
Had held her place outside,  
And, as a pleasant woman will,  
Had cheered the long, dull ride,  
45 Besought me, with so sweet a smile,  
That — though I hate delays —  
I could not choose but rest awhile, —  
(These women have such ways !)

" On yonder mossy ledge she sat,  
50 Her sketch upon her knees,

26. The nearer Indian form is Moosil'auke.

32. See Hawthorne's story of *The Great Stone Face*.

A stray brown lock beneath her hat  
 Unrolling in the breeze ;  
 Her sweet face, in the sunset light  
 Upraised and glorified, —  
 55 I never saw a prettier sight  
 In all my mountain ride.

“As good as fair ; it seemed her joy  
 To comfort and to give ;  
 My poor, sick wife, and cripple boy,  
 60 Will bless her while they live !”  
 The tremor in the driver’s tone  
 His manhood did not shame :  
 “I dare say, sir, you may have known” —  
 He named a well-known name.

65 Then sank the pyramidal mounds,  
 The blue lake fled away ;  
 For mountain-scope a parlor’s bounds,  
 A lighted hearth for day !  
 From lonely years and weary miles  
 70 The shadows fell apart ;  
 Kind voices cheered, sweet human smiles  
 Shone warm into my heart.

We journeyed on ; but earth and sky  
 Had power to charm no more ;  
 75 Still dreamed my inward-turning eye  
 The dream of memory o’er.  
 Ah ! human kindness, human love, —  
 To few who seek denied ;  
 Too late we learn to prize above  
 80 The whole round world beside !

65. The measure requires the pronunciation pyramid’al, though the accent belongs on the second syllable.



## THE PRAYER OF AGASSIZ.

ON the isle of Penikese,  
Ringed about by sapphire seas,  
Fanned by breezes salt and cool,  
Stood the Master with his school.  
5 Over sails that not in vain  
Woody the west-wind's steady strain,  
Line of coast that low and far  
Stretched its undulating bar,  
Wings aslant across the rim  
10 Of the waves they stooped to skim,  
Rock and isle and glistening bay,  
Fell the beautiful white day.

Said the Master to the youth:  
"We have come in search of truth,  
15 Trying with uncertain key  
Door by door of mystery;  
We are reaching, through His laws,  
To the garment-hem of Cause,

1. The island of Penikese in Buzzard's Bay was given by Mr. John Anderson to Agassiz for the uses of a summer school of natural history. A large barn was cleared and improvised as a lecture-room. Here, on the first morning of the school, all the company was gathered. "Agassiz had arranged no programme of exercises," says Mrs. Agassiz, in *Louis Agassiz; his Life and Correspondence*, "trusting to the interest of the occasion to suggest what might best be said or done. But, as he looked upon his pupils gathered there to study nature with him, by an impulse as natural as it was unpremeditated, he called upon them to join in silently asking God's blessing on their work together. The pause was broken by the first words of an address no less fervent than its unspoken prelude." This was in the summer of 1873, and Agassiz died the December following.

Him, the endless, unbegun,  
20 The Unnamable, the One  
Light of all our light the Source,  
Life of life, and Force of force.

As with fingers of the blind,  
We are groping here to find  
25 What the hieroglyphics mean  
Of the Unseen in the seen,  
What the Thought which underlies  
Nature's masking and disguise,  
What it is that hides beneath  
30 Blight and bloom and birth and death.  
By past efforts unavailing,  
Doubt and error, loss and failing,  
Of our weakness made aware,  
On the threshold of our task  
35 Let us light and guidance ask,  
Let us pause in silent prayer!"

Then the Master in his place  
Bowed his head a little space,  
And the leaves by soft airs stirred,  
40 Lapse of wave and cry of bird,  
Left the solemn hush unbroken  
Of that wordless prayer unspoken,  
While its wish, on earth unsaid,  
Rose to heaven interpreted.  
45 As, in life's best hours, we hear  
By the spirit's finer ear  
His low voice within us, thus  
The All-Father heareth us ;  
And His holy ear we pain  
50 With our noisy words and vain.

Not for Him our violence  
 Storming at the gates of sense,  
 His the primal language, His  
 The eternal silences !

26 Even the careless heart was moved,  
 And the doubting gave assent,  
 With a gesture reverent,  
 To the Master well-beloved.  
 As thin mists are glorified  
 30 By the light they cannot hide,  
 All who gazed upon him saw,  
 Through its veil of tender awe,  
 How his face was still uplit  
 By the old sweet look of it,  
 36 Hopeful, trustful, full of cheer,  
 And the love that casts out fear.  
 Who the secret may declare  
 Of that brief, unuttered prayer?  
 Did the shade before him come  
 40 Of th' inevitable doom,  
 Of the end of earth so near,  
 And Eternity's new year?

In the lap of sheltering seas  
 Rests the isle of Penikese ;  
 75 But the lord of the domain  
 Comes not to his own again :  
 Where the eyes that follow fail,  
 On a vaster sea his sail  
 Drifts beyond our beck and hail.  
 30 Other lips within its bound  
 Shall the laws of life expound ;  
 Other eyes from rock and shell

Read the world's old riddles well :  
But when breezes light and bland  
35 Blow from Summer's blossomed land,  
When the air is glad with wings,  
And the blithe song-sparrow sings,  
Many an eye with his still face  
Shall the living ones displace,  
40 Many an ear the word shall seek  
He alone could fitly speak.  
And one name forevermore  
Shall be uttered o'er and o'er  
By the waves that kiss the shore,  
45 By the curlew's whistle sent  
Down the cool, sea-scented air ;  
In all voices known to her,  
Nature owns her worshipper,  
Half in triumph, half lament.  
50 Thither Love shall tearful turn,  
Friendship pause uncovered there,  
And the wisest reverence learn  
From the Master's silent prayer.





MABEL MARTIN, AND OTHER POEMS

*WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES*



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## I.

### MABEL MARTIN.

[THIS poem was published in 1875, but it had already appeared in an earlier version in 1860 under the title of *The Witch's Daughter* in *Home Ballads and other Poems*. *Mabel Martin* is in the same measure as *The Witch's Daughter*, and many of the verses are the same, but the poet has taken the first draft as a sketch, filled it out, adding verses here and there, altering lines and making an introduction, so that the new version is a third longer than the old. The reader will find it interesting to compare the two poems. The scene is laid on the Merrimac, as Deer Island and Hawkswood, near Newburyport, intimate. A fruitful comparison might be drawn between the treatment of such subjects by Whittier and by Hawthorne.]

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### PART I.

#### THE RIVER VALLEY.

ACROSS the level table-land,  
A grassy, rarely trodden way,  
With thinnest skirt of birchen spray

And stunted growth of cedar, leads  
5 To where you see the dull plain fall  
Sheer off, steep-slanted, ploughed by all



The seasons' rainfalls. On its brink  
The over-leaning harebells swing;  
With roots half bare the pine-trees cling;

10 And, through the shadow looking west,  
You see the wavering river flow  
Along a vale, that far below

Holds to the sun, the sheltering hills,  
And glimmering water-line between,  
15 Broad fields of corn and meadows green,

And fruit-bent orchards grouped around  
The low brown roofs and painted eaves,  
And chimney-tops half hid in leaves.

No warmer valley hides behind  
20 Yon wind-scourged sand-dunes, cold and bleak,  
No fairer river comes to seek

The wave-sung welcome of the sea,  
Or mark the northmost border line  
Of sun-loved growths of nut and vine.

25 Here, ground-fast in their native fields,  
Untempted by the city's gain,  
The quiet farmer folk remain

Who bear the pleasant name of Friends,  
And keep their fathers' gentle ways  
30 And simple speech of Bible days;

In whose neat homesteads woman holds

With modest ease her equal place,  
And wears upon her tranquil face

The look of one who, merging not  
35 Her self-hood in another's will,  
Is love's and duty's handmaid still.

Pass with me down the path that winds  
Through birches to the open land,  
Where, close upon the river strand

40 You mark a cellar, vine-o'errun,  
Above whose wall of loosened stones  
The sumach lifts its reddening cones,

And the black nightshade's berries shine,  
And broad, unsightly burdocks fold  
45 The household ruin century-old.

Here, in the dim colonial time  
Of sterner lives and gloomier faith,  
A woman lived, tradition saith,

Who wrought her neighbors foul annoy,  
50 And witched and plagued the country-side,  
Till at the hangman's hand she died.

Sit with me while the westering day  
Falls slantwise down the quiet vale,  
And, haply, ere yon loitering sail,

55 That round the upper headland falls  
Below Deer Island's pines, or sees  
Behind it Hawkswood's belt of trees

Rise black against the sinking sun,  
My idyl of its days of old,  
60 The valley's legend shall be told.

## PART II.

## THE HUSKING.

It was the pleasant harvest-time,  
When cellar-bins are closely stowed,  
And garrets bend beneath their load,  
  
And the old swallow-haunted barns, —  
65 Brown-gabled, long, and full of seams  
Through which the moted sunlight streams,  
  
And winds blow freshly in, to shake  
The red plumes of the roosted cocks,  
And the loose hay-mow's scented locks, —  
  
70 Are filled with summer's ripened stores,  
Its odorous grass and barley sheaves,  
From their low scaffolds to their eaves.  
  
On Esek Harden's oaken floor,  
With many an autumn threshing worn,  
75 Lay the heaped ears of unhusked corn.  
  
And thither came young men and maids,  
Beneath a moon that, large and low,  
Lit that sweet eve of long ago.  
  
They took their places ; some by chance,

- 80 And others by a merry voice  
Or sweet smile guided to their choice.

How pleasantly the rising moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs !

- 85 On sturdy boyhood, sun-embrowned,  
On girlhood with its solid curves  
Of healthful strength and painless nerves !

- And jests went round, and laughs that made  
The house-dog answer with his howl,  
90 And kept astir the barn-yard fowl ;

And quaint old songs their fathers sung  
In Derby dales and Yorkshire moors,  
Ere Norman William trod their shores ;

- And tales, whose merry license shook  
95 The fat sides of the Saxon thane,  
Forgetful of the hovering Dane, —

Rude plays to Celt and Cimbri known,  
The charms and riddles that beguiled  
On Oxus' banks the young world's child, —

- 100 That primal picture-speech wherein  
Have youth and maid the story told,  
So new in each, so dateless old,

99. The Oxus, which was the great river of Upper Asia, flowed past what has been regarded as the birthplace of Western people, who emigrated from that centre. Some of the riddles and plays which we have are of great antiquity and may have been handed down from the time when our ancestors were still Asiatics.

Recalling pastoral Ruth in her  
 Who waited, blushing and demure,  
 105 The red-ear's kiss of forfeiture.

## PART III.

## THE WITCH'S DAUGHTER.

BUT still the sweetest voice was mute  
 That river-valley ever heard  
 From lips of maid or throat of bird ;  
  
 For Mabel Martin sat apart,  
 110 And let the hay-mow's shadow fall  
 Upon the loveliest face of all.

She sat apart, as one forbid,  
 Who knew that none would condescend  
 To own the Witch-wife's child a friend.  
  
 115 The seasons scarce had gone their round,  
 Since curious thousands thronged to see  
 Her mother at the gallows-tree ;

And mocked the prison-palsied limbs  
 That faltered on the fatal stairs,  
 120 And wan lip trembling with its prayers !

Few questioned of the sorrowing child,  
 Or, when they saw the mother die,  
 Dreamed of the daughter's agony.

117. In Upham's *History of Salem Witchcraft* will be found an account of the trial and execution of Susanna Martin for witchcraft.



They went up to their homes that day,  
125 As men and Christians justified :  
God willed it, and the wretch had died !

Dear God and father of us all,  
Forgive our faith in cruel lies, —  
Forgive the blindness that denies !

130 Forgive thy creature when he takes,  
For the all-perfect love Thou art,  
Some grim creation of his heart.

Cast down our idols, overturn  
Our bloody altars ; let us see  
135 Thyself in Thy humanity !

Young Mabel from her mother's grave  
Crept to her desolate hearth-stone,  
And wrestled with her fate alone ;

With love, and anger, and despair,  
140 The phantoms of disordered sense,  
The awful doubts of Providence !

Oh, dreary broke the winter days,  
And dreary fell the winter nights  
When, one by one, the neighboring lights

145 Went out, and human sounds grew still,  
And all the phantom-peopled dark  
Closed round her hearth-fire's dying spark.

And summer days were sad and long,

And sad the uncompanioned eves,  
150 And sadder sunset-tinted leaves,

And Indian Summer's airs of balm ;  
She scarcely felt the soft caress,  
The beauty died of loneliness !

The school-boys jeered her as they passed,  
155 And, when she sought the house of prayer, —  
Her mother's curse pursued her there.

And still o'er many a neighboring door  
She saw the horseshoe's curv'd charm,  
To guard against her mother's harm :

160 That mother, poor and sick and lame,  
Who daily, by the old arm-chair,  
Folded her withered hands in prayer ; —

Who turned, in Salem's dreary jail,  
Her worn old Bible o'er and o'er,  
165 When her dim eyes could read no more !

Sore tried and pained, the poor girl kept  
Her faith, and trusted that her way,  
So dark, would somewhere meet the day.

And still her weary wheel went round  
Day after day, with no relief :  
Small leisure have the poor for grief.

## PART IV.

## THE CHAMPION.

So in the shadow Mabel sits ;  
Untouched by mirth she sees and hears,  
Her smile is sadder than her tears.

275 But cruel eyes have found her out,  
And cruel lips repeat her name,  
And taunt her with her mother's shame.

She answered not with railing words,  
But drew her apron o'er her face,  
180 And, sobbing, glided from the place.

And only pausing at the door,  
Her sad eyes met the troubled gaze  
Of one who, in her better days,

Had been her warm and steady friend,  
185 Ere yet her mother's doom had made  
Even Esek Harden half afraid.

He felt that mute appeal of tears,  
And, starting, with an angry frown,  
Hushed all the wicked murmurs down.

190 "Good neighbors mine," he sternly said,  
"This passes harmless mirth or jest ;  
I brook no insult to my guest.

“She is indeed her mother’s child ;  
 But God’s sweet pity ministers  
 195 Unto no whiter soul than hers.

“Let Goody Martin rest in peace ;  
 I never knew her harm a fly,  
 And witch or not, God knows — not **I**.

“I know who swore her life away ;  
 200 And as God lives I ’d not condemn  
 An Indian dog on word of them.”

The broadest lands in all the town,  
 The skill to guide, the power to awe,  
 Were Harden’s ; and his word was law.

205 None dared withstand him to his face,  
 But one sly maiden spake aside :  
 “The little witch is evil-eyed !

“Her mother only killed a cow,  
 Or witched a churn or dairy-pan ;  
 210 But she, forsooth, must charm a man !”

## PART V.

### IN THE SHADOW.

POOR Mabel, homeward turning, passed  
 The nameless terrors of the wood,  
 And saw, as if a ghost pursued,

Her shadow gliding in the moon :

- 215 The soft breath of the west-wind gave  
A chill as from her mother's grave.

How dreary seemed the silent house !  
Wide in the moonbeams' ghastly glare  
Its windows had a dead man's stare !

- 220 And, like a gaunt and spectral hand,  
The tremulous shadow of a birch  
Reached out and touched the door's low porch

- As if to lift its latch : hard by,  
A sudden warning call she heard,  
225 The night-cry of a brooding bird.

She leaned against the door ; her face,  
So fair, so young, so full of pain,  
White in the moonlight's silver rain.

- The river, on its pebbled rim,  
230 Made music such as childhood knew ;  
The door-yard tree was whispered through

By voices such as childhood's ear  
Had heard in moonlights long ago ;  
And through the willow-boughs below

- 235 She saw the rippled waters shine ;  
Beyond, in waves of shade and light,  
The hills rolled off into the night.

She saw and heard, but over all  
A sense of some transforming spell,  
240 The shadow on her sick heart fell.



And still across the wooded space  
The harvest lights of Harden shone,  
And song and jest and laugh went on.

And he, so gentle, true, and strong,  
245 Of men the bravest and the best,  
Had he, too, scorned her with the rest?

She strove to drown her sense of wrong,  
And, in her old and simple way,  
To teach her bitter heart to pray.

250 Poor child! the prayer, begun in faith  
Grew to a low, despairing cry  
Of utter misery: "Let me die!

"Oh! take me from the scornful eyes,  
And hide me where the cruel speech  
255 And mocking finger may not reach!

"I dare not breathe my mother's name:  
A daughter's right I dare not crave  
To weep above her unblest grave!

"Let me not live until my heart,  
260 With few to pity, and with none  
To love me, hardens into stone.

"O God! have mercy on thy child,  
Whose faith in Thee grows weak and small,  
And take me ere I lose it all!"

265 A shadow on the moonlight fell,

And murmuring wind and wave became  
A voice whose burden was her name.

## PART VI.

## THE BETROTHAL.

HAD then God heard her? Had He sent  
His angel down? In flesh and blood,  
270 Before her Esek Harden stood!

He laid his hand upon her arm :  
“ Dear Mabel, this no more shall be ;  
Who scoffs at you must scoff at me.

“ You know rough Esek Harden well ;  
275 And if he seems no suitor gay,  
And if his hair is touched with gray,

“ The maiden grown shall never find  
His heart less warm than when she smiled,  
Upon his knees, a little child ! ”

280 Her tears of grief were tears of joy,  
As, folded in his strong embrace,  
She looked in Esek Harden's face.

“ Oh, truest friend of all ! ” she said,  
“ God bless you for your kindly thought,  
285 And make me worthy of my lot ! ”

He led her forth, and, blent in one,  
Beside their happy pathway ran  
The shadows of the maid and man.

He led her through his dewy fields,  
290 To where the swinging lanterns glowed,  
And through the doors the huskers showed.

“ Good friends and neighbors ! ” Esek said,  
“ I ’m weary of this lonely life ;  
In Mabel see my chosen wife !

295 “ She greets you kindly, one and all ;  
The past is past, and all offence  
Falls harmless from her innocence.

“ Henceforth she stands no more alone ;  
You know what Esek Harden is ; —  
300 He brooks no wrong to him or his.

“ Now let the merriest tales be told,  
And let the sweetest songs be sung  
That ever made the old heart young !

“ For now the lost has found a home ;  
305 And a lone hearth shall brighter burn.  
As all the household joys return ! ”

Oh, pleasantly the harvest-moon,  
Between the shadow of the mows,  
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs !

310 On Mabel’s curls of golden hair,  
On Esek’s shaggy strength it fell ;  
And the wind whispered, “ It is well ! ”

## II.

## COBBLER KEEZAR'S VISION.

[“THIS ballad was written,” Mr. Whittier says, “on the occasion of a Horticultural Festival. Cobbler Keezar was a noted character among the first settlers in the valley of the Merrimac.”]

---

THE beaver cut his timber  
 With patient teeth that day,  
 The minks were fish-wards, and the crows  
 Surveyors of highway, —

6 When Keezar sat on the hill-side  
 Upon his cobbler's form,  
 With a pan of coals on either hand  
 To keep his waxed-ends warm.

And there, in the golden weather,  
 10 He stitched and hammered and sung;  
 In the brook he moistened his leather,  
 In the pewter mug his tongue.

Well knew the tough old Teuton  
 Who brewed the stoutest ale,  
 15 And he paid the goodwife's reckoning  
 In the coin of song and tale.

The songs they still are singing  
 Who dress the hills of vine,

The tales that haunt the Brocken  
20 And whisper down the Rhine.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,  
The swift stream wound away,  
Through birches and scarlet maples  
Flashing in foam and spray, —

25 Down on the sharp-horned ledges  
Plunging in steep cascade,  
Tossing its white-maned waters  
Against the hemlock's shade.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,  
30 East and west and north and south;  
Only the village of fishers  
Down at the river's mouth;

Only here and there a clearing,  
With its farm-house rude and new,  
35 And tree-stumps, swart as Indians,  
Where the scanty harvest grew.

No shout of home-bound reapers,  
No vintage-song he heard,  
And on the green no dancing feet  
40 The merry violin stirred.

“Why should folk be glum,” said Keezar,  
“When nature herself is glad,

19. The *Brocken* is the highest summit of the Hartz range in Germany, and a great body of superstitions has gathered about the whole range. May-day night, called Walpurgis Night, is held to be the time of a great witch festival on the Brocken.



And the painted woods are laughing  
At the faces so sour and sad ? ”

45 Small heed had the careless cobbler  
What sorrow of heart was theirs  
Who travailed in pain with the births of God,  
And planted a state with prayers, —

Hunting of witches and warlocks,  
50 Smiting the heathen horde, —  
One hand on the mason's trowel,  
And one on the soldier's sword !

But give him his ale and cider,  
Give him his pipe and song,  
55 Little he cared for Church or State,  
Or the balance of right and wrong.

“ 'Tis work, work, work,” he muttered, —  
“ And for rest a snuffle of psalms ! ”  
He smote on his leathern apron  
60 With his brown and waxen palms.

“ Oh for the purple harvests  
Of the days when I was young !  
For the merry grape-stained maidens,  
And the pleasant songs they sung !

65 “ Oh for the breath of vineyards,  
Of apples and nuts and wine !  
For an oar to row and a breeze to blow  
Down the grand old river Rhine ! ”

A tear in his blue eye glistened,  
 70 And dropped on his beard so gray.  
 "Old, old am I," said Keezar,  
 "And the Rhine flows far away!"

But a cunning man was the cobbler;  
 He could call the birds from the trees,  
 75 Charm the black snake out of the ledges,  
 And bring back the swarming bees.

All the virtues of herbs and metals,  
 All the lore of the woods, he knew,  
 And the arts of the Old World mingled  
 80 With the marvels of the New.

Well he knew the tricks of magic,  
 And the lapstone on his knee  
 Had the gift of the Mormon's goggles,  
 Or the stone of Doctor Dee.

85 For the mighty master Agrippa  
 Wrought it with spell and rhyme  
 From a fragment of mystic moonstone  
 In the tower of Nettesheim.

To a cobbler Minnesinger  
 90 The marvellous stone gave he, —  
 And he gave it, in turn, to Keezar,  
 Who brought it over the sea.

84. Dr. John Dee was a man of vast knowledge, who had an extensive museum, library, and apparatus; he claimed to be an astrologer, and had acquired the reputation of having dealings with evil spirits, and a mob was raised which destroyed the greater part of his possessions. He professed to raise the dead and had a magic crystal. He died a pauper in 1608.

85. Henry Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535) was an alchemist.

He held up that mystic lapstone,  
He held it up like a lens,  
95 And he counted the long years coming  
By twenties and by tens.

“One hundred years,” quoth Keezar,  
“And fifty have I told :  
Now open the new before me,  
100 And shut me out the old !”

Like a cloud of mist, the blackness  
Rolled from the magic stone,  
And a marvellous picture mingled  
The unknown and the known.

105 Still ran the stream to the river,  
And river and ocean joined ;  
And there were the bluffs and the blue sea-line,  
And cold north hills behind.

But the mighty forest was broken  
110 By many a steepled town,  
By many a white-walled farm-house,  
And many a garner brown.

Turning a score of mill-wheels,  
The stream no more ran free ;  
115 White sails on the winding river,  
White sails on the far-off sea.

Below in the noisy village  
The flags were floating gay,  
And shone on a thousand faces  
120 The light of a holiday.

Swiftly the rival ploughmen  
 Turned the brown earth from their shares;  
 Here were the farmer's treasures,  
 There were the craftsman's wares.

125 Golden the goodwife's butter,  
 Ruby her currant-wine;  
 Grand were the strutting turkeys,  
 Fat were the beeves and swine.

Yellow and red were the apples,  
 130 And the ripe pears russet-brown,  
 And the peaches had stolen blushes  
 From the girls who shook them down.

And with blooms of hill and wild-wood,  
 That shame the toil of art,  
 135 Mingled the gorgeous blossoms  
 Of the garden's tropic heart.

"What is it I see?" said Keezar:  
 "Am I here, or am I there?  
 Is it a fête at Bingen?  
 140 Do I look on Frankfort fair?"

"But where are the clowns and puppets,  
 And imps with horns and tail?  
 And where are the Rhenish flagons?  
 And where is the foaming ale?"

145 "Strange things, I know, will happen, —  
 Strange things the Lord permits;  
 But that doughty folk should be jolly  
 Puzzles my poor old wits.

“ Here are smiling manly faces,  
150 And the maiden's step is gay ;  
Nor sad by thinking, nor mad by drinking,  
Nor mopes, nor fools, are they.

Here's pleasure without regretting,  
And good without abuse,  
155 The holiday and the bridal  
Of beauty and of use.

“ Here's a priest and there is a Quaker, —  
Do the cat and dog agree ?  
Have they burned the stocks for oven-wood ?  
160 Have they cut down the gallows-tree ?

“ Would the old folks know their children ?  
Would they own the graceless town,  
With never a ranter to worry  
And never a witch to drown ? ”

165 Loud laughed the cobbler Keezar,  
Laughed like a school-boy gay ;  
Tossing his arms above him,  
The lapstone rolled away.

It rolled down the rugged hill-side,  
170 It spun like a wheel bewitched,  
It plunged through the leaning willows,  
And into the river pitched.

There, in the deep, dark water,  
The magic stone lies still,  
175 Under the leaning willows  
In the shadow of the hill.

But oft the idle fisher  
 Sits on the shadowy bank,  
 And his dreams make marvellous pictures  
 180 Where the wizard's lapstone sank.

And still, in the summer twilights,  
 When the river seems to run  
 Out from the inner glory,  
 Warm with the melted sun,

185 The weary mill-girl lingers  
 Beside the charméd stream,  
 And the sky and the golden water  
 Shape and color her dream.

Fair wave the sunset gardens,  
 190 The rosy signals fly;  
 Her homestead beckons from the cloud,  
 And love goes sailing by!



## III.

## BARCLAY OF URY.

[AMONG the earliest converts to the doctrines of Friends in Scotland was Barclay of Ury, an old and distinguished soldier, who had fought under Gustavus Adolphus in Germany. As a Quaker, he became the object of persecution and abuse at the hands of the magistrates and the populace. None bore the indignities of the mob with greater patience and nobleness of soul than this once proud gentleman and soldier. One



of his friends, on an occasion of uncommon rudeness, lamented that he should be treated so harshly in his old age who had been so honored before. "I find more satisfaction," said Barclay, "as well as honor, in being thus insulted for my religious principles, than when, a few years ago, it was usual for the magistrates, as I passed the city of Aberdeen, to meet me on the road and conduct me to public entertainment in their hall, and then escort me out again, to gain my favor." — *Whittier.*]

---

UP the streets of Aberdeen,  
 By the kirk and college green,  
     Rode the Laird of Ury ;  
 Close behind him, close beside,  
 5 Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,  
     Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,  
 Jeered at him the serving-girl,  
     Prompt to please her master ;  
 10 And, the begging carlin, late  
 Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,  
     Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet, with calm and stately mien,  
 Up the streets of Aberdeen  
 15 Came he slowly riding ;  
 And, to all he saw and heard  
 Answering not with bitter word,  
     Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broadswords swinging,  
 20 Bits and bridles sharply ringing,  
     Loose and free and froward ;  
 Quoth the foremost, " Ride him down !  
 Push him ! prick him ! through the town  
     Drive the Quaker coward ! "

25 But from out the thickening crowd  
 Cried a sudden voice and loud :  
     " Barclay ! Ho ! a Barclay ! "  
 And the old man at his side  
 Saw a comrade, battle tried,  
 30      Scarred and sunburned darkly

Who with ready weapon bare,  
 Fronting to the troopers there,  
     Cried aloud : " God save us,  
 Call ye coward him who stood  
 35 Ankle deep in Lützen's blood,  
     With the brave Gustavus ? "

" Nay, I do not need thy sword,  
 Comrade mine," said Ury's lord ;  
     " Put it up, I pray thee :  
 40 Passive to His holy will,  
 Trust I in my Master still,  
     Even though He slay me.

" Pledges of thy love and faith,  
 Proved on many a field of death,  
 45      Not by me are needed."

35. It was at Lützen, near Leipzig, that Gustavus Adolphus fell in 1632. He was the hero of Schiller's *Wallenstein*, which Carlyle calls "the greatest tragedy of the eighteenth century."

Marvelled much that henchman bold,  
That his laird, so stout of old,  
Now so meekly pleaded.

“Woe’s the day !” he sadly said,  
50 With a slowly shaking head,  
And a look of pity ;  
“Ury’s honest lord reviled,  
Mock of knave and sport of child,  
In his own good city !

55 “Speak the word, and, master mine,  
As we charged on Tilly’s line,  
And his Walloon lancers,  
Smiting through their midst we’ll teach  
Civil look and decent speech  
60 To these boyish prancers !”

“Marvel not, mine ancient friend,  
Like beginning, like the end :”  
Quoth the Laird of Ury,  
“Is the sinful servant more  
65 Than his gracious Lord who bore  
Bonds and stripes in Jewry ?

“Give me joy that in His name  
I can bear, with patient frame,  
All these vain ones offer ;  
70 While for them He suffereth long,  
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,  
Scoffing with the scoffer ?

58. Count de Tilly was a fierce soldier under Wallenstein, who in the Thirty Years’ War laid siege to Magdeburg, and after two years took it and displayed great barbarity toward the inhabitants. The phrase, “like old Tilly,” is still heard sometimes in New England of any piece of special ferocity.

“ Happier I, with loss of all,  
 Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,  
 75 With few friends to greet me,  
 Than when reeve and squire were seen,  
 Riding out from Aberdeen,  
 With bared heads to meet me.

“ When each goodwife, o’er and o’er,  
 30 Blessed me as I passed her door ;  
 And the snooded daughter,  
 Through her casement glancing down,  
 Smiled on him who bore renown  
 From red fields of slaughter.

65 “ Hard to feel the stranger’s scoff,  
 Hard the old friend’s falling off,  
 Hard to learn forgiving ;  
 But the Lord His own rewards,  
 And His love with theirs accords,  
 90 Warm and fresh and living.

“ Through this dark and stormy night  
 Faith beholds a feeble light  
 Up the blackness streaking ;  
 Knowing God’s own time is best,  
 35 In a patient hope I rest  
 For the full day-breaking ! ”

So the Laird of Ury said,  
 Turning slow his horse’s head  
 Towards the Tolbooth prison,  
 100 Where, through iron grates, he heard  
 Poor disciples of the Word  
 Preach of Christ arisen !

Not in vain, Confessor old,  
 Unto us the tale is told  
 105       Of thy day of trial;  
 Every age on him, who strays  
 From its broad and beaten ways,  
           Pours its sevenfold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear  
 110 Angel comfortings can hear,  
           O'er the rabble's laughter;  
 And while Hatred's fagots burn,  
 Glimpses through the smoke discern  
           Of the good hereafter.

115 Knowing this, that never yet  
 Share of Truth was vainly set  
           In the world's wide fallow;  
 After hands shall sow the seed,  
 After hands from hill and mead  
 120       Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,  
 Must the moral pioneer  
           From the Future borrow;  
 Clothe the waste with dreams of grain  
 125 And, on midnight's sky of rain,  
           Paint the golden morrow!

## IV.

## MAUD MULLER.

MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day,  
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth  
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

• Singing she wrought, and her merry glee  
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,  
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest  
10 And a nameless longing filled her breast, —

A wish, that she hardly dared to own,  
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,  
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

15 He drew his bridle in the shade  
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed  
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,  
20 And filled for him her small tin cup,



And blushed as she gave it, looking down  
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

“Thanks!” said the Judge; “a sweeter draught  
From a fairer hand was never quaffed.”

- 25 He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,  
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether  
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

- And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,  
30 And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise  
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay  
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

- 35 Maud Muller looked and sighed: “Ah me!  
That I the Judge’s bride might be!

“He would dress me up in silks so fine,  
And praise and toast me at his wine.

- “My father should wear a broadcloth coat  
40 My brother should sail a painted boat.

“I’d dress my mother so grand and gay,  
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

“ And I ’d feed the hungry and clothe the poor,  
And all should bless me who left our door.”

45 The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,  
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

“ A form more fair, a face more sweet,  
Ne’er hath it been my lot to meet.

“ And her modest answer and graceful air  
50 Show her wise and good as she is fair.

“ Would she were mine, and I, to-day,  
Like her, a harvester of hay :

“ No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,  
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

55 “ But low of cattle and song of birds,  
And health and quiet and loving words.”

But he thought of his sisters proud and cold,  
And his mother vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,  
60 And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,  
When he hummed in court an old love-tune ;

And the young girl mused beside the well  
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

- 65 He wedded a wife of richest dower,  
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,  
He watched a picture come and go ;

- And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes  
70 Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,  
He longed for the wayside well instead ;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms  
To dream of meadows and clover blooms.

- 75 And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,  
" Ah, that I were free again !

" Free as when I rode that day,  
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

- She wedded a man unlearned and poor,  
80 And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,  
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot  
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

- 85 And she heard the little spring brook fall  
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again  
She saw a rider draw his rein.

And, gazing down with timid grace,  
90 She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls  
Stretched away into stately halls ;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,  
The tallow candle an astral burned,

95 And for him who sat by the chimney lug,  
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,  
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,  
100 Saying only, " It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,  
For rich repiner and household drudge !

God pity them both ! and pity us all,  
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

105 For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these : " It might have been ! "

Ah, well ! for us all some sweet hope lies  
Deeply buried from human eyes ;

106. The exigencies of rhyme have a heavy burden to bear in this line.

And, in the hereafter, angels may  
 110 Roll the stone from its grave away !



## V.

## KATHLEEN.

[THIS ballad was originally published in a prose work by Mr. Whittier, as the song of a wandering Milesian schoolmaster.

In the seventeenth century, slavery in the New World was by no means confined to the natives of Africa. Political offenders and criminals were transported by the British government to the plantations of Barbadoes and Virginia, where they were sold like cattle in the market. Kidnapping of free and innocent white persons was practised to a considerable extent in the sea-ports of the United Kingdom.]



O NORAH, lay your basket down,  
 And rest your weary hand,  
 And come and hear me sing a song  
 Of our old Ireland.

5 There was a lord of Galaway,  
 A mighty lord was he ;  
 And he did wed a second wife,  
 A maid of low degree.

But he was old, and she was young,  
 10 And so, in evil spite,

She baked the black bread for his kin,  
And fed her own with white.

She whipped the maids and starved the kern,  
And drove away the poor ;  
15 " Ah, woe is me ! " the old lord said,  
" I rue my bargain sore ! "

This lord he had a daughter fair,  
Beloved of old and young,  
And nightly round the shealing-fires  
20 Of her the gleeman sung.

" As sweet and good is young Kathleen  
As Eve before her fall " ;  
So sang the harper at the fair,  
So harped he in the hall.

25 " Oh come to me, my daughter dear !  
Come sit upon my knee,  
For looking in your face, Kathleen,  
Your mother's own I see ! "

He smoothed and smoothed her hair away,  
30 He kissed her forehead fair ;  
" It is my darling Mary's brow,  
It is my darling's hair ! "

Oh, then spake up the angry dame,  
" Get up, get up," quoth she,  
35 " I 'll sell ye over Ireland,  
I 'll sell ye o'er the sea ! "



She clipped her glossy hair away,  
That none her rank might know,  
She took away her gown of silk,  
40 And gave her one of tow,

And sent her down to Limerick town  
And to a seaman sold  
This daughter of an Irish lord  
For ten good pounds in gold.

45 The lord he smote upon his breast,  
And tore his beard so gray ;  
But he was old, and she was young,  
And so she had her way.

Sure that same night the Banshee howled  
50 To fright the evil dame,  
And fairy folks, who loved Kathleen,  
With funeral torches came.

She watched them glancing through the trees,  
And glimmering down the hill ;  
55 They crept before the dead-vault door,  
And there they all stood still !

“Get up, old man ! the wake-lights shine !”  
“Ye murthering witch,” quoth he,  
“So I’m rid of your tongue, I little care  
60 If they shine for you or me.”

“Oh, whoso brings my daughter back,  
My gold and land shall have !”  
Oh, then spake up his handsome page,  
“No gold nor land I crave !

85 “ But give to me your daughter dear,  
Give sweet Kathleen to me,  
Be she on sea or be she on land,  
I ’ll bring her back to thee.”

“ My daughter is a lady born,  
70 And you of low degree,  
But she shall be your bride the day  
You bring her back to me.”

He sailed east, he sailed west,  
And far and long sailed he,  
75 Until he came to Boston town,  
Across the great salt sea.

“ Oh, have ye seen the young Kathleen,  
The flower of Ireland ?  
Ye ’ll know her by her eyes so blue,  
80 And by her snow-white hand ! ”

Out spake an ancient man, “ I know  
The maiden whom ye mean ;  
I bought her of a Limerick man,  
And she is called Kathleen.

85 “ No skill hath she in household work,  
Her hands are soft and white,  
Yet well by loving looks and ways  
She doth her cost requite.”

So up they walked through Boston town,  
90 And met a maiden fair,  
A little basket on her arm  
So snowy-white and bare.

“Come hither, child, and say hast thou  
This young man ever seen?”

95 They wept within each other's arms,  
The page and young Kathleen.

“Oh, give to me this darling child,  
And take my purse of gold.”

“Nay, not by me,” her master said,

100 “Shall sweet Kathleen be sold.

“We loved her in the place of one  
The Lord hath early ta'en;  
But, since her heart's in Ireland,  
We give her back again!”

105 Oh, for that same the saints in heaven  
For his poor soul shall pray,  
And Mary Mother wash with tears  
His heresies away.

Sure now they dwell in Ireland,  
110 As you go up Claremore  
Ye'll see their castle looking down  
The pleasant Galway shore.

And the old lord's wife is dead and gone,  
And a happy man is he,  
115 For he sits beside his own Kathleen,  
With her darling on his knee.

## VI.

## RED RIDING-HOOD.

ON the wide lawn the snow lay deep,  
 Ridged o'er with many a drifted heap;  
 The wind that through the pine-trees sung  
 The naked elm-boughs tossed and swung;  
 5 While through the window, frosty-starred,  
 Against the sunset purple barred,  
 We saw the sombre crow flap by,  
 The hawk's gray fleck along the sky,  
 The crested blue-jay flitting swift,  
 10 The squirrel poising on the drift,  
 Erect, alert, his broad gray tail  
 Set to the north wind like a sail.

It came to pass, our little lass,  
 With flattened face against the glass,  
 15 And eyes in which the tender dew  
 Of pity shone, stood gazing through  
 The narrow space her rosy lips  
 Had melted from the frost's eclipse:  
 "Oh, see," she cried, "the poor blue-jays!  
 20 What is it that the black crow says?  
 The squirrel lifts his little legs  
 Because he has no hands, and begs;  
 He's asking for my nuts, I know:  
 May I not feed them on the snow?"

25 Half lost within her boots, her head  
 Warm-sheltered in her hood of red,

Her plaid skirt close about her drawn,  
 She floundered down the wintry lawn;  
 Now struggling through the misty veil  
 30 Blown round her by the shrieking gale;  
 Now sinking in a drift so low  
 Her scarlet hood could scarcely show  
 Its dash of color on the snow.

She dropped for bird and beast forlorn  
 35 Her little store of nuts and corn,  
 And thus her timid guests bespoke :  
 " Come, squirrel, from your hollow oak, —  
 Come, black old crow, — come, poor blue-jay,  
 Before your supper 's blown away !  
 40 Don't be afraid, we all are good ;  
 And I 'm mamma's Red Riding-Hood ! "

O Thou whose care is over all,  
 Who heedest even the sparrow's fall,  
 Keep in the little maiden's breast  
 45 The pity which is now its guest !  
 Let not her cultured years make less  
 The childhood charm of tenderness,  
 But let her feel as well as know,  
 Nor harder with her polish grow !  
 50 Unmoved by sentimental grief  
 That wails along some printed leaf,  
 But, prompt with kindly word and deed  
 To own the claims of all who need,  
 Let the grown woman's self make good  
 55 The promise of Red Riding, Hood !

## VII.

## IN SCHOOL-DAYS.

STILL sits the school-house by the road,  
A ragged beggar sunning ;  
Around it still the sumachs grow,  
And blackberry-vines are running.

5 Within, the master's desk is seen,  
Deep scarred by raps official ;  
The warping floor, the battered seats,  
The jack-knife's carved initial ;

The charcoal frescos on its wall ;  
10 Its door's worn sill, betraying  
The feet that, creeping slow to school,  
Went storming out to playing !

Long years ago a winter sun  
Shone over it at setting ;  
15 Lit up its western window-panes,  
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,  
And brown eyes full of grieving,  
Of one who still her steps delayed  
20 When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy  
Her childish favor singled :



His cap pulled low upon a face  
Where pride and shame were mingled.

25 Pushing with restless feet the snow  
To right and left, he lingered ; —  
As restlessly her tiny hands  
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes ; he felt  
30 The soft hand's light caressing,  
And heard the tremble of her voice,  
As if a fault confessing.

“ I 'm sorry that I spelt the word :  
I hate to go above you,  
35 Because,” — the brown eyes lower fell, —  
“ Because, you see, I love you ! ”

Still memory to a gray-haired man  
That sweet child-face is showing.  
Dear girl ! the grasses on her grave  
40 Have forty years been growing !

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,  
How few who pass above him  
Lament their triumph and his loss,  
Like her, — because they love him.

## VIII.

## MARY GARVIN.

FROM the heart of Waumbek Methna, from the lake  
that never fails,  
Falls the Saco in the green lap of Conway's inter-  
vales ;  
There, in wild and virgin freshness, its waters foam  
and flow,  
As when Darby Field first saw them, two hundred  
years ago.

6 But, vexed in all its seaward course with bridges,  
dams, and mills,  
How changed is Saco's stream, how lost its freedom  
of the hills,  
Since travelled Jocelyn, factor Vines, and stately  
Champernoon  
Heard on its banks the gray wolf's howl, the trumpet  
of the loon !

With smoking axle hot with speed, with steeds of  
fire and steam,  
• 10 Wide-waked To-day leaves Yesterday behind him  
like a dream.  
Still, from the hurrying train of Life, fly backward  
far and fast  
The milestones of the fathers, the landmarks of the  
past.

But human hearts remain unchanged : the sorrow  
and the sin,  
The loves and hopes and fears of old, are to our own  
akin ;  
15 And if, in tales our fathers told, the songs our moth-  
ers sung,  
Tradition wears a snowy beard, Romance is always  
young.

O sharp-lined man of traffic, on Saco's banks to-  
day !  
O mill-girl watching late and long the shuttle's rest-  
less play !  
Let, for the once, a listening ear the working hand  
beguile,  
20 And lend my old Provincial tale, as suits, a tear or  
smile !

---

The evening gun had sounded from gray Fort Mary's  
walls ;  
Through the forest, like a wild beast, roared and  
plunged the Saco's falls.

And westward on the sea-wind, that damp and gusty  
grew,  
Over cedars darkening inland the smokes of Spur-  
wink blew.  
25 On the hearth of Farmer Garvin blazed the crackling  
walnut log ;  
Right and left sat dame and goodman, and between  
them lay the dog,

Head on paws, and tail slow wagging, and beside him  
on her mat,  
Sitting drowsy in the fire-light, winked and purred  
the mottled cat.

“Twenty years!” said Goodman Garvin, speaking  
sadly, under breath,  
30 And his gray head slowly shaking, as one who speaks  
of death.

The goodwife dropped her needles: “It is twenty  
years to-day,  
Since the Indians fell on Saco, and stole our child  
away.”

Then they sank into the silence, for each knew the  
other’s thought,  
Of a great and common sorrow, and words were  
needed not.

35 “Who knocks?” cried Goodman Garvin. The door  
was open thrown;  
On two strangers, man and maiden, cloaked and  
furred, the fire-light shone.

One with courteous gesture lifted the bear-skin from  
his head;  
“Lives here Elkanah Garvin?” “I am he,” the  
goodman said.

“Sit ye down, and dry and warm ye, for the night is  
chill with rain.”  
40 And the goodwife drew the settle, and stirred the fire  
amain.

The maid unclasped her cloak-hood, the fire-light  
glistened fair  
In her large, moist eyes, and over soft folds of dark  
brown hair.

Dame Garvin looked upon her : “ It is Mary’s self I  
see !

Dear heart ! ” she cried, “ now tell me, has my child  
come back to me ? ”

45 “ My name indeed is Mary,” said the stranger, sob-  
bing wild ;

“ Will you be to me a mother ? I am Mary Garvin’s  
child !

“ She sleeps by wooded Simcoe, but on her dying  
day

She bade my father take me to her kinsfolk far  
away.

“ And when the priest besought her to do me no such  
wrong,

50 She said, ‘ May God forgive me ! I have closed my  
heart too long.

“ ‘ When I hid me from my father, and shut out my  
mother’s call,

I sinned against those dear ones, and the Father of us  
all.

“ ‘ Christ’s love rebukes no home-love, breaks no tie  
of kin apart ;

Better heresy in doctrine, than heresy of heart.

55 “ ‘ Tell me not the Church must censure : she who  
wept the Cross beside  
Never made her own flesh strangers, nor the claims  
of blood denied ;

“ ‘ And if she who wronged her parents, with her child  
atones to them,  
Earthly daughter, Heavenly mother ! thou at least  
wilt not condemn ! ’

“ So, upon her death-bed lying, my blessed mother  
spake ;  
60 As we come to do her bidding, so receive us for her  
sake.”

“ God be praised ! ” said Goodwife Garvin, “ He tak-  
eth, and he gives ;  
He woundeth, but He healeth ; in her child our daugh-  
ter lives ! ”

“ Amen ! ” the old man answered, as he brushed a  
tear away,  
And, kneeling by his hearthstone, said, with rever-  
ence, “ Let us pray.”

55 All its Oriental symbols, and its Hebrew paraphrase,  
Warm with earnest life and feeling, rose his prayer  
of love and praise.

But he started at beholding, as he rose from off his  
knee,  
The stranger cross his forehead with the sign of Pa-  
pistrie.



“What is this?” cried Farmer Garvin. “Is an  
English Christian’s home

70 A chapel or a mass-house, that you make the sign of  
Rome?”

Then the young girl knelt beside him, kissed his  
trembling hand, and cried:

“Oh, forbear to chide my father; in that faith my  
mother died!

“On her wooden cross at Simcoe the dews and sun-  
shine fall,

As they fall on Spurwink’s graveyard; and the dear  
God watches all!”

75 The old man stroked the fair head that rested on his  
knee;

“Your words, dear child,” he answered, “are God’s  
rebuke to me.

“Creed and rite perchance may differ, yet our faith  
and hope be one.

Let me be your father’s father, let him be to me a  
son.”

When the horn, on Sabbath morning, through the still  
and frosty air,

80 From Spurwink, Pool, and Black Point, called to ser-  
mon and to prayer,

To the goodly house of worship, where, in order due  
and fit,

As by public vote directed, classed and ranked the  
people sit;

Mistress first and goodwife after, clerkly squire before the clown,

From the brave coat, lace-embroidered, to the gray frock, shading down ;

85 From the pulpit read the preacher, — “ Goodman Garvin and his wife

Fain would thank the Lord, whose kindness has followed them through life,

“ For the great and crowning mercy, that their daughter, from the wild,

Where she rests (they hope in God’s peace), has sent to them her child ;

“ And the prayers of all God’s people they ask, that they may prove

30 Not unworthy, through their weakness, of such special proof of love.”

As the preacher prayed, uprising, the aged couple stood,

And the fair Canadian also, in her modest maidenhood.

Thought the elders grave and doubting, “ She is Papist born and bred ” ;

Thought the young men, “ ’T is an angel in Mary Garvin’s stead ! ”

## IX.

## THE EXILES.

1660.

[THOMAS MACEY, an early settler of Salisbury, Mass., was prosecuted for entertaining Quakers, and fled with his family in an open boat down the river Merrimac and out to sea to the island Nantucket which he and some of his neighbors, in anticipation of trouble from the Puritan authorities, had already purchased as a place of refuge.]

---

THE goodman sat beside his door  
 One sultry afternoon,  
 With his young wife singing at his side  
 An old and goodly tune.

5 A glimmer of heat was in the air ;  
 The dark green woods were still ;  
 And the skirts of a heavy thunder-cloud  
 Hung over the western hill.

Black, thick, and vast arose that cloud  
 10 Above the wilderness,  
 As some dark world from upper air  
 Were stooping over this.

At times the solemn thunder pealed,  
 And all was still again,  
 15 Save a low murmur in the air  
 Of coming wind and rain.

Just as the first big rain-drop fell,  
A weary stranger came,  
And stood before the farmer's door,  
20 With travel soiled and lame.

Sad seemed he, yet sustaining hope  
Was in his quiet glance,  
And peace, like autumn's moonlight, clothed  
His tranquil countenance.

25 A look, like that his Master wore  
In Pilate's council-hall :  
It told of wrongs, — but of a love  
Meekly forgiving all.

“ Friend ! wilt thou give me shelter here ? ”  
30 The stranger meekly said ;  
And, leaning on his oaken staff,  
The goodman's features read.

“ My life is hunted, — evil men  
Are following in my track ;  
35 The traces of the torturer's whip  
Are on my aged back.

“ And much, I fear, 't will peril thee  
Within thy doors to take  
A hunted seeker of the Truth,  
40 Oppressed for conscience' sake.”

Oh, kindly spoke the goodman's wife, —  
“ Come in, old man ! ” quoth she, —

18. The stranger was William Robinson or Marmaduke Stevenson.

“We will not leave thee to the storm,  
Whoever thou mayst be.”

45 Then came the aged wanderer in,  
And silent sat him down ;  
While all within grew dark as night  
Beneath the storm-cloud's frown.

But while the sudden lightning's blaze  
60 Filled every cottage nook,  
And with the jarring thunder-roll  
The loosened casements shook,

A heavy tramp of horses' feet  
Came sounding up the lane,  
65 And half a score of horse, or more,  
Came plunging through the rain.

“Now, Goodman Macey, ope thy door, —  
We would not be house-breakers ;  
A rueful deed thou 'st done this day,  
80 In harboring banished Quakers.”

Out looked the cautious goodman then,  
With much of fear and awe,  
For there, with broad wig drenched with rain,  
The parish priest he saw.

65 “Open thy door, thou wicked man,  
And let thy pastor in,  
And give God thanks, if forty stripes  
Repay thy deadly sin.”

“What seek ye?” quoth the goodman, —

70 “The stranger is my guest :

He is worn with toil and grievous wrong, —

Pray let the old man rest.”

“Now, out upon thee, canting knave !”

And strong hands shook the door.

75 “Believe me, Macey,” quoth the priest, —

“Thou ’lt rue thy conduct sore.”

Then kindled Macey’s eye of fire :

“No priest who walks the earth

Shall pluck away the stranger-guest

80 Made welcome to my hearth.”

Down from his cottage wall he caught

The matchlock, hotly tried

At Preston-pans and Marston-moor,

By fiery Ireton’s side ;

85 Where Puritan, and Cavalier,

With shout and psalm contended ;

And Rupert’s oath, and Cromwell’s prayer,

With battle-thunder blended.

Up rose the ancient stranger then :

90 “My spirit is not free

To bring the wrath and violence

Of evil men on thee :

“And for thyself, I pray forbear, —

Bethink thee of thy Lord,

95 Who healed again the smitten ear,

And sheathed his follower’s sword.



“I go, as to the slaughter ied :  
Friends of the poor, farewell !”  
Beneath his hand the oaken door  
100 Back on its hinges fell.

“Come forth, old graybeard, yea and nay,”  
The reckless scoffers cried,  
As to a horseman’s saddle-bow  
The old man’s arms were tied.

105 And of his bondage hard and long  
In Boston’s crowded jail,  
Where suffering woman’s prayer was heard,  
With sickening childhood’s wail,

It suits not with our tale to tell :  
110 Those scenes have passed away, —  
Let the dim shadows of the past  
Brood o’er that evil day.

“Ho, sheriff !” quoth the ardent priest, —  
“Take Goodman Macey too ;  
115 The sin of this day’s heresy  
His back or purse shall rue.”

“Now, goodwife, haste thee !” Macey cried,  
She caught his manly arm : —  
Behind, the parson urged pursuit,  
120 With outcry and alarm.

Ho ! speed the Maceys, neck or naught, —  
The river-course was near : —

The plashing on its pebbled shore  
Was music to their ear.

125 A gray rock, tasselled o'er with birch,  
Above the waters hung,  
And at its base, with every wave,  
A small light wherry swung.

A leap — they gain the boat — and there  
130 The goodman wields his oar :  
“ Ill luck betide them all,” — he cried, —  
“ The laggards upon the shore.”

Down through the crashing underwood,  
The burly sheriff came : —  
135 “ Stand, Goodman Macey, — yield thyself ;  
Yield in the King's own name.”

“ Now out upon thy hangman's face ! ”  
Bold Macey answered then, —  
“ Whip *women*, on the village green,  
140 But meddle not with *men*.”

The priest came panting to the shore, —  
His grave cocked hat was gone ;  
Behind him, like some owl's nest, hung  
His wig upon a thorn.

145 “ Come back, — come back ! ” the parson cried,  
“ The church's curse beware.”  
“ Curse, an' thou wilt,” said Macey, “ but  
Thy blessing prithee spare.”

“Vile scoffer!” cried the baffled priest, —

150 “Thou’lt yet the gallows see.”

“Who’s born to be hanged, will not be drowned,”  
Quoth Macey, merrily ;

“And so, sir sheriff and priest, good by!”

He bent him to his oar,

155 And the small boat glided quietly  
From the twain upon the shore.

Now in the west, the heavy clouds

Scattered and fell asunder,

While feebler came the rush of rain,

160 And fainter growled the thunder.

And through the broken clouds, the sun

Looked out serene and warm,

Painting its holy symbol-light

Upon the passing storm.

165 O, beautiful! that rainbow span,

O’er dim Crane-neck was bended ; —

One bright foot touched the eastern hills,

And one with ocean blended.

By green Pentucket’s southern slope

170 The small boat glided fast, —

The watchers of “the Block-house” saw

The strangers as they passed.

That night a stalwart garrison

Sat shaking in their shoes,

175 To hear the dip of Indian oars, —

The glide of birch canoes.

The fisher-wives of Salisbury  
    (The men were all away)  
Looked out to see the stranger oar  
180     Upon their waters play.

Deer-Island's rocks and fir-trees threw  
    Their sunset-shadows o'er them,  
And Newbury's spire and weathercock  
    Peered o'er the pines before them.

185 Around the Black Rocks, on their left,  
    The marsh lay broad and green ;  
And on their right, with dwarf shrubs crowned,  
    Plum Island's hills were seen.

With skilful hand and wary eye  
190     The harbor-bar was crossed ; —  
A plaything of the restless wave,  
    The boat on ocean tossed.

The glory of the sunset heaven  
    On land and water lay, —  
195     On the steep hills of Agawam,  
    On cape, and bluff, and bay.

They passed the gray rocks of Cape Ann,  
    And Gloucester's harbor-bar ;  
The watch-fire of the garrison  
200     Shone like a setting star.

How brightly broke the morning  
    On Massachusetts Bay !  
Blue wave, and bright green island,  
    Rejoicing in the day.

205 On passed the bark in safety  
Round isle and headland steep, —  
No tempest broke above them,  
No fog-cloud veiled the deep.

Far round the bleak and stormy Cape  
210 The vent'rous Macey passed,  
And on Nantucket's naked isle  
Drew up his boat at last.

And how, in log-built cabin,  
They braved the rough sea-weather;  
215 And there, in peace and quietness,  
Went down life's vale together :

How others drew around them,  
And how their fishing sped,  
Until to every wind of heaven  
220 Nantucket's sails were spread ;

How pale Want alternated  
With Plenty's golden smile ;  
Behold, is it not written  
In the annals of the isle ?

225 And yet that isle remaineth  
A refuge of the free,  
As when true-hearted Macey  
Beheld it from the sea.

Free as the winds that winnow  
230 Her shrubless hills of sand, —  
Free as the waves that batter  
Along her yielding land.

Than hers, at duty's summons,  
 No loftier spirit stirs, —  
 235 Nor falls o'er human suffering  
 A readier tear than hers.

God bless the sea-beat island! —  
 And grant forevermore,  
 That charity and freedom dwell  
 240 As now upon her shore!

Fentucket was the name of the territory on the north bank of the Merrimac, including Haverhill. The place is now nearly that of the town of Merrimac.





## X.

## THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA.

[A letter-writer from Mexico during the Mexican war, when detailing some of the incidents at the terrible fight of Buena Vista, mentioned that Mexican women were seen hovering near the field of death, for the purpose of giving aid and succor to the wounded. One poor woman was found surrounded by the maimed and suffering of both armies, ministering to the wants of Americans as well as Mexicans with impartial tenderness.]

---

SPEAK and tell us, our Ximena, looking northward  
far away,

O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican array,  
Who is losing? who is winning? are they far or come  
they near?

Look abroad, and tell us, sister, whither rolls the storm  
we hear.

5 "Down the hills of Angostura still the storm of battle  
rolls;

Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have mercy  
on their souls!"

Who is losing? who is winning? "Over hill and  
over plain,

I see but smoke of cannon clouding through the  
mountain rain."

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look, Ximena,  
look once more.

1 Ximena, pronounced Hēmā'nā.

- 10 "Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling darkly as before,  
Bearing on, in strange confusion, friend and foeman,  
foot and horse,  
Like some wild and troubled torrent sweeping down  
its mountain course."

- Look forth once more, Ximena! "Ah! the smoke  
has rolled away;  
And I see the Northern rifles gleaming down the  
ranks of gray.  
15 Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there the troop of  
Minon wheels;  
There the Northern horses thunder, with the cannon  
at their heels.

- "Jesu, pity! how it thickens! now retreat and now  
advance!  
Right against the blazing cannon shivers Puebla's  
charging lance!  
Down they go, the brave young riders; horse and  
foot together fall;  
20 Like a ploughshare in the fallow, through them  
ploughs the Northern ball."

- Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling fast and  
frightful on!  
Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has lost, and  
who has won?  
"Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe together  
fall,  
O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my sisters, for  
them all!

25 "Lo ! the wind the smoke is lifting. Blessed Mother,  
save my brain !

I can see the wounded crawling slowly out from heaps  
of slain.

Now they stagger, blind and bleeding ; now they fall,  
and strive to rise ;

Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest they die be-  
fore our eyes !

"O my heart's love ! O my dear one ! lay thy poor  
head on my knee ;

30 Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee ? Canst thou  
hear me ? canst thou see ?

O my husband, brave and gentle ! O my Bernal, look  
once more

On the blessed cross before thee ! Mercy ! mercy ! all  
is o'er ! "

Dry thy tears, my poor Ximena ; lay thy dear one  
down to rest ;

Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the cross upon  
his breast ;

35 Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his funeral  
masses said ;

To-day, thou poor bereavèd one, the living ask thy aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and young, a  
soldier lay,

Torn with shot and pierced with lances, bleeding slow  
his life away ;

But, as tenderly before him the lorn Ximena knelt,

40 She saw the Northern eagle shining on his pistol  
belt.

With a stifled cry of horror straight she turned away  
her head ;

With a sad and bitter feeling looked she back upon  
her dead ;

But she heard the youth's low moaning, and his  
struggling breath of pain,

And she raised the cooling water to his parching lips  
again.

45 Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed her hand  
and faintly smiled ;

Was that pitying face his mother's ? did she watch  
beside her child ?

All his stranger words with meaning her woman's  
heart supplied ;

With her kiss upon his forehead, " Mother ! " mur-  
mured he, and died !

" A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who led thee  
forth,

80 From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weeping, lonely,  
in the North ! "

Spake the mournful Mexic woman, as she laid him  
with her dead,

And turned to soothe the living, and bind the wounds  
which bled.

Look forth once more, Ximena ! " Like a cloud  
before the wind

Rolls the battle down the mountains, leaving blood  
and death behind ;

55 Ah ! they plead in vain for mercy ; in the dust the  
wounded strive ;

Hide your faces, holy angels! O thou Christ of  
God, forgive!"

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let the cool,  
gray shadows fall;

Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy curtain  
over all!

Through the thickening winter twilight, wide apart  
the battle rolled,

60 In its sheath the sabre rested, and the cannon's lips  
grew cold.

But the noble Mexic women still their holy task  
pursued,

Through that long, dark night of sorrow, worn and  
faint and lacking food.

Over weak and suffering brothers, with a tender  
care they hung,

And the dying foeman blessed them in a strange  
and Northern tongue.

65 Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil world of ours;  
Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring afresh  
the Eden flowers;

From its smoking hell of battle, Love and Pity send  
their prayer,

And still thy white-winged angels hover dimly in  
our air!

## XI.

## SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE.

[This story as told by Whittier was founded on a fragment of verse which he had heard in his schooldays ; but a more careful inquiry has shown that in reality the crew refused to succor the distressed vessel and then, to screen themselves, threw the blame on the skipper. "I supposed," Whittier wrote to Samuel Roads, Jr., the author of a *History of Marblehead*, "the story to which it referred dated back at least a century. I knew nothing of the participators, and the narrative of the ballad was pure fancy. I am glad for the sake of truth and justice that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living."]

- 
- OF all the rides since the birth of time,  
 Told in story or sung in rhyme, —  
 On Apuleius's Golden Ass,  
 Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,  
 5 Witch astride of a human back,  
 Islam's prophet on Al-Borák, —  
 The strangest ride that ever was sped  
 Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead !  
 Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 10 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 By the women of Marblehead !

Body of turkey, head of owl,  
 Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,

3. A story told by a Roman writer in the second century.

4. One of the Arabian Nights stories.



- Feathered and ruffled in every part,  
 15 Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.  
 Scores of women, old and young,  
 Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,  
 Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,  
 Shouting and singing the shrill refrain :  
 20 " Here 's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
 Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
 By the women o' Morble'ead ! "

- Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,  
 Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,  
 25 Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase  
 Bacchus round some antique vase,  
 Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,  
 Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,  
 With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,  
 30 Over and over the Mænads sang :  
 " Here 's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
 Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
 By the women o' Morble'ead ! "

- Small pity for him ! — He sailed away  
 35 From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay, —  
 Sailed away from a sinking wreck,  
 With his own town's-people on her deck !  
 " Lay by ! lay by ! " they called to him.  
 Back he answered, " Sink or swim !  
 40 Brag of your catch of fish again ! "  
 And off he sailed through the fog and rain !  
 Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 By the women of Marblehead !

- 45 Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur  
 That wreck shall lie forevermore.  
 Mother and sister, wife and maid,  
 Looked from the rocks of Marblehead  
 Over the moaning and rainy sea, —  
 50 Looked for the coming that might not be!  
 What did the winds and the sea-birds say  
 Of the cruel captain who sailed away? —  
 Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
 Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
 55 By the women of Marblehead!

- Through the street, on either side,  
 Up flew windows, doors swung wide;  
 Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,  
 Treble lent the fish-horn's bray,  
 60 Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,  
 Hulks of old sailors run aground,  
 Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,  
 And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:  
 "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,  
 65 Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
 By the women o' Morble'ead!"

- Sweetly along the Salem road  
 Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.  
 Little the wicked skipper knew  
 70 Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.  
 Riding there in his sorry trim,  
 Like an Indian idol glum and grim,  
 Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear  
 Of voices shouting, far and near:  
 75 "Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt  
By the women o' Morble'ead !”

- “Hear me, neighbors !” at last he cried, —  
“What to me is this noisy ride ?  
80 What is the shame that clothes the skin  
To the nameless horror that lives within ?  
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,  
And hear a cry from a reeling deck !  
Hate me and curse me, — I only dread  
85 The hand of God and the face of the dead !”  
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead !

- Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea  
90 Said, “God has touched him ! why should we !”  
Said an old wife mourning her only son,  
“Cut the rogue's tether and let him run !”  
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,  
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,  
95 And gave him a cloak to hide him in,  
And left him alone with his shame and sin.  
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,  
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart  
By the women of Marblehead !

## XII.

### THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW.

[An incident of the Sepoy Mutiny.]

PIPES of the misty moorlands,  
Voice of the glens and hills ;

The droning of the torrents,  
The treble of the rills !

- 6 Not the braes of bloom and heather,  
Nor the mountains dark with rain,  
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,  
Have heard your sweetest strain !

- Dear to the Lowland reaper,  
10 And plaided mountaineer, —  
To the cottage and the castle  
The Scottish pipes are dear ; —  
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch  
O'er mountain, loch, and glade ;  
15 But the sweetest of all music  
The pipes at Lucknow played.

- Day by day the Indian tiger  
Louder yelled, and nearer crept ;  
Round and round the jungle-serpent  
20 Near and nearer circles swept.  
“Pray for rescue, wives and mothers, —  
Pray to-day !” the soldier said ;  
“To-morrow, death's between us  
And the wrong and shame we dread.”

- 25 Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,  
Till their hope became despair ;  
And the sobs of low bewailing  
Filled the pauses of their prayer.  
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,

16. The Sepoy mutiny was a terrible revolt of a portion of the native troops in India against English rule, which took place in 1857. The siege of Lucknow, when the incident here related took place, was one of the most stirring events of the war.

30 With her ear unto the ground :  
 “ Dinna ye hear it ? — dinna ye hear it ?  
 The pipes o’ Havelock sound ! ”

Hushed the wounded man his groaning ;  
 Hushed the wife her little ones ;  
 35 Alone they heard the drum-roll  
 And the roar of Sepoy guns.  
 But to sounds of home and childhood  
 The Highland ear was true ; —  
 As her mother’s cradle-crooning  
 40 The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music  
 Through the vision of the seer,  
 More of feeling than of hearing,  
 Of the heart than of the ear,  
 45 She knew the droning pibroch,  
 She knew the Campbell’s call :  
 “ Hark ! hear ye no MacGregor’s,  
 The grandest o’ them all ! ”

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,  
 50 And they caught the sound at last ;  
 Faint and far beyond the Goomtee  
 Rose and fell the piper’s blast !  
 Then a burst of wild thanksgiving  
 Mingled woman’s voice and man’s ;  
 55 “ God be praised ! — the march of Havelock !  
 The piping of the clans ! ”

32. Sir Henry Havelock, an English general who died not long after the relief of Lucknow. In our war for the Union the havelocks or cap-capes which soldiers wore were named from him.

47. Campbell and MacGregor are names of Scottish clans.

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,  
 Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,  
 Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,  
 60 Stinging all the air to life.  
 But when the far-off dust-cloud  
 To plaided legions grew,  
 Full tenderly and blithesomely  
 The pipes of rescue blew!

65 Round the silver domes of Lucknow,  
 Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,  
 Breathed the air to Britons dearest,  
 The air of Auld Lang Syne.  
 O'er the cruel roll of war-drums  
 70 Rose that sweet and homelike strain;  
 And the tartan clove the turban,  
 As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper  
 And plaided mountaineer, —  
 75 To the cottage and the castle  
 The piper's song is dear.  
 Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch  
 O'er mountain-glen and glade;  
 But the sweetest of all music  
 80 The pipes at Lucknow played!

## XIII.

## THE SYCAMORES.

In the outskirts of the village,  
 On the river's winding shores,



Stand the Occidental plane-trees,  
Stand the ancient sycamores.

5 One long century hath been numbered,  
And another half-way told,  
Since the rustic Irish gleeman  
Broke for them the virgin mould.

Deftly set to Celtic music,  
10 At his violin's sound they grew,  
Through the moonlit eves of summer,  
Making Amphion's fable true.

Rise again, thou poor Hugh Tallant!  
Pass in jerkin green along,  
15 With thy eyes brimful of laughter,  
And thy mouth as full of song.

Pioneer of Erin's outcasts,  
With his fiddle and his pack;  
Little dreamed the village Saxons  
20 Of the myriads at his back.

How he wrought with spade and fiddle,  
Delved by day and sang by night,  
With a hand that never wearied,  
And a heart forever light, —

25 Still the gay tradition mingles  
With a record grave and drear,

13. Hugh Tallant was the first Irish resident of Haverhill, Massachusetts, Whittier's native town. He planted the buttonwood trees on the river bank.

Like the rollic air of Cluny  
With the solemn march of Mear.

When the box-tree, white with blossoms,  
30 Made the sweet May woodlands glad,  
And the Aronia by the river  
Lighted up the swarming shad,

And the bulging nets swept shoreward,  
With their silver-sided haul,  
35 Midst the shouts of dripping fishers,  
He was merriest of them all.

When, among the jovial huskers,  
Love stole in at Labor's side,  
With the lusty airs of England  
40 Soft his Celtic measures vied,

Songs of love and wailing lyke-wake,  
And the merry fair's carouse ;  
Of the wild Red Fox of Erin  
And the Woman of Three Cows.

45 By the blazing hearths of winter,  
Pleasant seemed his simple tales,  
Midst the grimmer Yorkshire legends  
And the mountain myths of Wales.

How the souls in Purgatory  
50 Scrambled up from fate forlorn,  
On St. Keven's sackcloth ladder,  
Slyly hitched to Satan's horn.

23. Mear is the name of a psalm tune.

Of the fiddler who at Tara  
 Played all night to ghosts of kings;  
 65 Of the brown dwarfs, and the fairies  
 Dancing in their moorland rings!

Jolliest of our birds of singing,  
 Best he loved the Bob-o-link.  
 "Hush!" he'd say, "the tipsy fairies!"  
 60 Hear the little folks in drink!"

Merry-faced, with spade and fiddle,  
 Singing through the ancient town,  
 Only this, of poor Hugh Tallant,  
 Hath Tradition handed down.

65 Not a stone his grave discloses;  
 But if yet his spirit walks,  
 'Tis beneath the trees he planted,  
 And when Bob-o-Lincoln talks;

Green memorials of the gleeman!  
 70 Linking still the river-shores,  
 With their shadows cast by sunset,  
 Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores!

When the Father of his Country  
 Through the north-land riding came,  
 75 And the roofs were starred with banners,  
 And the steeples rang acclaim,—

When each war-scarred Continental,  
 Leaving smithy, mill, and farm,  
 Waved his rusted sword in welcome,  
 80 And shot off his old king's-arm,—

Slowly passed that august Presence  
Down the thronged and shouting street;  
Village girls as white as angels  
Scattering flowers around his feet.

85 Midway, where the plane-tree's shadow  
Deepest fell, his rein he drew :  
On his stately head, uncovered,  
Cool and soft the west-wind blew.

And he stood up in his stirrups,  
90 Looking up and looking down  
On the hills of gold and silver  
Rimming round the little town, —

On the river, full of sunshine,  
To the lap of greenest vales  
95 Winding down from wooded headlands,  
Willow-skirted, white with sails.

And he said, the landscape sweeping  
Slowly with his ungloved hand,  
“I have seen no prospect fairer  
100 In this goodly Eastern land.”

Then the bugles of his escort  
Stirred to life the cavalcade :  
And that head, so bare and stately,  
Vanished down the depths of shade.

105 Ever since, in town and farm-house,  
Life has had its ebb and flow ;  
Thrice hath passed the human harvest  
To its garner green and low.

But the trees the gleeman planted,  
110 Through the changes, changeless stand;  
As the marble calm of Tadmor  
Mocks the desert's shifting sand.

Still the level moon at rising  
Silvers o'er each stately shaft;  
115 Still beneath them, half in shadow,  
Singing, glides the pleasure craft;

Still beneath them; arm-enfolded,  
Love and Youth together stray;  
While, as heart to heart beats faster,  
120 More and more their feet delay.

Where the ancient cobbler, Keezar,  
On the open hillside wrought,  
Singing, as he drew his stitches,  
Songs his German masters taught,

125 Singing, with his gray hair floating  
Round his rosy ample face, —  
Now a thousand Saxon craftsmen  
Stitch and hammer in his place.

All the pastoral lanes so grassy  
130 Now are Traffic's dusty streets;  
From the village, grown a city,  
Fast the rural grace retreats.

But, still green, and tall, and stately,  
On the river's winding shores,

135 Stand the Occidental plane-trees,  
Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores.

## XIV.

## THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS.

[This poem was called out by the popular movement of Free State men to occupy the territory of Kansas, and by the use of the great democratic weapon—an overpowering majority—to settle the conflict on that ground between Freedom and Slavery. This song was sent to the first company of emigrants by the poet, and was sung by parties of emigrants,—sung when they started, sung as they rode, and sung in the new home.]

---

WE cross the prairie as of old  
The pilgrims crossed the sea,  
To make the West, as they the East,  
The homestead of the free.

6 We go to rear a wall of men  
On Freedom's southern line,  
And plant beside the cotton-tree  
The rugged Northern pine!

We're flowing from our native hills  
15 As our free rivers flow:  
The blessing of our Mother-land  
Is on us as we go.

We go to plant her common schools  
On distant prairie swells,



15 And give the Sabbaths of the wild  
The music of her bells.

Upbearing, like the Ark of old,  
The Bible in our van,  
We go to test the truth of God  
20 Against the fraud of man.

No pause, nor rest, save where the streams  
That feed the Kansas run,  
Save where our Pilgrim gonfalon  
Shall flout the setting sun !

25 We 'll tread the prairie as of old  
Our fathers sailed the sea,  
And make the West, as they the East.  
The homestead of the free !

## XV.

### BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

[“This poem,” says Mr. Whittier, “was written in strict conformity to the account of the incident as I had it from respectable and trustworthy sources. It has since been the subject of a good deal of conflicting testimony, and the story was probably incorrect in some of its details. It is admitted by all that Barbara Frietchie was no myth, but a worthy and highly esteemed gentlewoman intensely loyal and a hater of the Slavery Rebellion, holding her Union flag sacred and keeping it with her Bible ; that when the Confederates halted before her house, and entered her dooryard, she denounced them in vigorous language, shook her cane in their faces, and

drove them out; and when General Burnside's troops followed close upon Jackson's, she waved her flag and cheered them. It is stated that May Quantrell, a brave and loyal lady in another part of the city, did wave her flag in sight of the Confederates. It is possible ~~that~~ there has been a blending of the two incidents." ]

---

UP from the meadows rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand  
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

5 Round about them orchards sweep,  
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord  
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall  
10 When Lee marched over the mountain-wall;

Over the mountains winding down  
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,  
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

15 Flapped in the morning wind: the sun  
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,  
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,  
30 She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,  
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,  
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

25 Under his slouched hat left and right  
He glanced; the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!" — the dust-brown ranks stood fast.  
"Fire!" — out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;  
30 It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff  
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,  
And shook it forth with a royal will.

35 "Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,  
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,  
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred  
40 To life at that woman's deed and word;

“Who touches a hair of yon gray head  
Dies like a dog! March on!” he said.

All day long through Frederick street  
Sounded the tread of marching feet :

45 All day long that free flag tost  
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell  
On the loyal winds that loved it well ;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light  
40 Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,  
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more

Honor to her ! and let a tear  
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

55 Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,  
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave !

Peace and order and beauty draw  
Round thy symbol of light and law ;

And ever the stars above look down  
60 On thy stars below in Frederick town !

## XVI.

## LAUS DEO!

[On hearing the bells ring on the passage of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. The resolution was adopted by Congress, January 31, 1865. The ratification by the requisite number of States was announced December 18, 1865. The suggestion came to the poet as he sat in the Friends' Meeting-house in Amesbury, where he was present at the regular Fifth-day meeting. All sat in silence, but on his return to his home, he recited a portion of the poem, not yet committed to paper, to his housemates in the garden room. "It wrote itself, or rather sang itself, while the bells rang," he wrote to Lucy Larcom.]

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It is done!

Clang of bell and roar of gun  
Send the tidings up and down.

How the belfries rock and reel!

How the great guns, peal on peal,  
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O bells!

Every stroke exulting tells  
Of the burial hour of crime.

Loud and long, that all may hear,  
Ring for every listening ear  
Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel:

God's own voice is in that peal,

15 And this spot is holy ground.  
     Lord, forgive us! What are we,  
     That our eyes this glory see,  
     That our ears have heard the sound!

        For the Lord  
 20 On the whirlwind is abroad;  
     In the earthquake He has spoken;  
     He has smitten with His thunder  
     The iron walls asunder,  
     And the gates of brass are broken!

35 Loud and long  
     Lift the old exulting song;  
     Sing with Miriam by the sea,  
     He has cast the mighty down;  
     Horse and rider sink and drown;  
 30 "He hath triumphed gloriously!"

        Did we dare,  
     In our agony of prayer,  
     Ask for more than He has done?  
     When was ever His right hand  
 35 Over any time or land  
     Stretched as now beneath the sun?

        How they pale,  
     Ancient myth and song and tale,  
     In this wonder of our days,  
 40 When the cruel rod of war  
     Blossoms white with righteous law,  
     And the wrath of man is praise!



Blotted out!

All within and all about  
 45 Shall a fresher life begin ;  
     Freer breathe the universe  
     As it rolls its heavy curse  
 On the dead and buried sin !

It is done !

50 In the circuit of the sun  
 Shall the sound thereof go forth.  
     It shall bid the sad rejoice,  
     It shall give the dumb a voice,  
 It shall belt with joy the earth !

55 Ring and swing,  
     Bells of joy ! On morning's wing  
 Send the song of praise abroad !  
     With a sound of broken chains  
     Tell the nations that He reigns,  
 60 Who alone is Lord and God !

## XVII.

### THE WISHING BRIDGE.

AMONG the legends sung or said  
 Along our rocky shore,  
 The Wishing Bridge of Marblehead  
 May well be sung once more.

3 An hundred years ago (so ran  
     The old-time story) all  
 Good wishes said above its span  
     Would, soon or late, befall.

If pure and earnest, never failed

- 10    The prayers of man or maid  
For him who on the deep sea sailed,  
For her at home who stayed.

Once thither came two girls from school,

And wished in childish glee :

- 15    And one would be a queen and rule,  
And one the world would see.

Time passed ; with change of hopes and fears,

And in the self-same place,

Two women, gray with middle years,

- 20    Stood, wondering, face to face.

With wakened memories, as they met,

They queried what had been :

“ A poor man’s wife am I, and yet,”

Said one, “ I am a queen.

- 25    “ My realm a little homestead is,  
Where, lacking crown and throne,  
I rule by loving services  
And patient toil alone.”

The other said : “ The great world lies

- 30    Beyond me as it lay ;  
O’er love’s and duty’s boundaries  
My feet may never stray.

“ I see but common sights of home,

Its common sounds I hear,

- 35    My widowed mother’s sick-bed room  
Sufficeth for my sphere.

“I read to her some pleasant page  
 Of travel far and wide,  
 And in a dreamy pilgrimage  
 40 We wander side by side.

“And when at last she falls asleep,  
 My book becomes to me  
 A magic glass; my watch I keep,  
 But all the world I see.

45 “A farm-wife queen your place you fill,  
 While fancy’s privilege  
 Is mine to walk the earth at will,  
 Thanks to the Wishing Bridge.”

“Nay, leave the legend for the truth,”  
 50 The other cried, “and say  
 God gives the wishes of our youth,  
 But in His own best way!”

## XVIII.

## CONDUCTOR BRADLEY.

CONDUCTOR BRADLEY, (always may his name  
 Be said with reverence!) as the swift doom came,  
 Smitten to death, a crushed and mangled frame,

Sank, with the brake he grasped just where he stood  
 5 To do the utmost that a brave man could,  
 And die, if needful, as a true man should.

1. A railway conductor who lost his life in an accident on a Connecticut  
 railway, May 9, 1873.

Men stooped above him ; women dropped their tears  
 On that poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,  
 Lost in the strength and glory of his years.

- 19 What heard they ? Lo ! the ghastly lips of pain,  
 Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again :  
 " Put out the signals for the other train ! "

- No nobler utterance since the world began  
 From lips of saint or martyr ever ran,  
 15 Electric, through the sympathies of man.

Ah me ! how poor and noteless seem to this  
 The sick-bed dramas of self-consciousness,  
 Our sensual fears of pain and hopes of bliss !

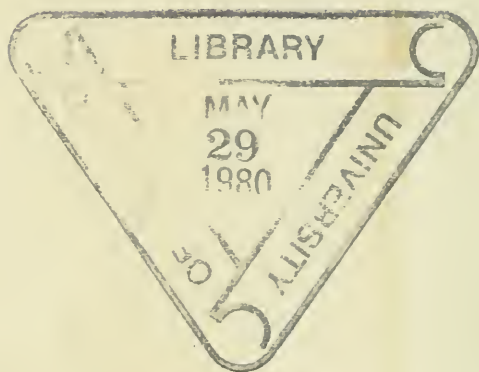
- Oh, grand, supreme endeavor ! Not in vain  
 20 That last brave act of failing tongue and brain !  
 Freight with life the downward rushing train,

Following the wrecked one, as wave follows wave,  
 Obeyed the warning which the dead lips gave.  
 Others he saved, himself he could not save.

- 25 Nay, the lost life *was* saved. He is not dead  
 Who in his record still the earth shall tread  
 With God's clear aureole shining round his head.

- We bow as in the dust, with all our pride  
 Of virtue dwarfed the noble deed beside.  
 30 God give us grace to live as Bradley died !







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